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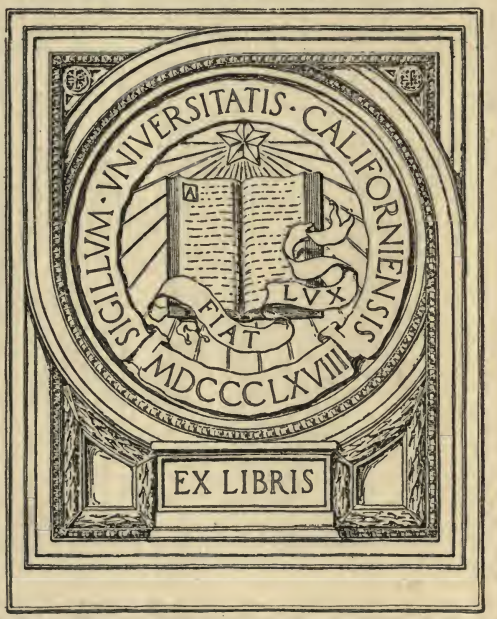

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UNCLE SAM'S BIBLE

OR

Bible Teachings About Politics

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UNCLE SAM'S BIBLE

OR

Bible Teachings About Politics

BY

JAMES B. CONVERSE

Author of "The Bible and Land," and formerly Editor of The Christian Patriot *and* The Christian Observer.

"Righteousness Exalteth a Nation."

CHICAGO

THE SCHULTE PUBLISHING COMPANY

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GIFT

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

DEDICATED

TO

UNCLE SAM'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS

NORTH AND SOUTH, EAST AND WEST.

"*IT SHALL COME TO PASS, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the* LORD *thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments, . . . that the* LORD *thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:*

"*And all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the* LORD *thy God.*

"*Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.*

"*Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.*

"*Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.*

"*Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.*

"*The* LORD *shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face. . . .*

"*The* LORD *shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto, . . . if thou shalt keep the commandments of the* LORD *thy God, and walk in his ways.*"

—DEUTERONOMY 28:1-9.

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PREFACE.

"Uncle Sam" needs a Bible. May this book persuade him to look for one. For there is a Bible especially designed and written for him. Blessed will he be if he will take it from the pulpit cushion or the parlor table and carry it into his senate chambers, his executive mansions and his court-rooms, and study and obey it.

This book looks at political questions from the standpoint of righteousness or conformity to God's will. It has few predecessors; may it have many successors! Its publishers hope "that it will arouse more interest and exert greater influence than any book ever did, excepting the Bible." The realization of their hope will be the greatest blessing to our posterity to the latest generation. For the scripturalness of its twenty-eight principles will be seriously questioned only by those who, like the Rev. Luther Calvin Wesley, D.D., prefer their earthly comforts to God's word. The danger is that these truths will be overlooked in the future as they have been in the past. We therefore ask for the prayers and co-operation of the pious reader that the benevolent and patriotic wishes of the publishers may be accomplished.

To condense into one volume the discussion of so many reforms commanded by God required brevity. Perhaps this has led sometimes to obscurity. The expediency and wisdom of the reforms have been but

slightly touched, and the details for executing them have been omitted. Until the principles are adopted the discussion of the details is useless. The debates about expediency, as shown in Chapter V., are endless and fruitless. There is a better way. Right is always right and always best. With all this condensation the whole ground of reform is not traversed.

The narrative form has been adopted. But the reader who wishes to study the subject systematically will be aided by the table of contents and four indexes.

To the Holy Spirit, who has shown the author much in His word that, although plain, has been hidden from our generation, be all glory. That He will show it to the readers and fix it in their hearts is his prayer.

Morristown, Tenn.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION.

Rev. Jacob Jones at Home—Description of Characters—Need of Reform—"Hard Times"—Concentration of Wealth—Growth of Class Distinctions—Decline of Church Attendance—Useless to Expect Reform from the Political Parties—Or from the Conversion of the People—Motives for Reform: Our Personal Interests; Love for Christ—Reform is the Conversion of Our Civilization from Idolatry to Christianity..... 17

CHAPTER II.

THE HIGHER LAW

All Human Laws Should Conform to God's Law—The Mischief Done by Making an Opinion of Man a Part of the Law of God—The Existence of a Higher Law Argued from God's Knowledge—From His Benevolence—Acknowledged by Blackstone and the Common Law—Applies to Every Act of Man—Moral and Positive Precepts—Every Human Law should be Either an Interpretation or Application of the Higher Law..... 22

CHAPTER III.

THE BEST LAW BOOK.

The Bible the Best Means of Learning the Higher Law—Acknowledged by Blackstone—Argued from God's Benevolence—From the Character of the Bible—Benefits of Understanding its Character—Other Means of Learning the Higher Law—Women not Excused from Studying It..... 28

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST AND REFORM.

No Life is Wasted that is Spent in Teaching the Higher Law—Christ its Great Teacher—Not Inconsistent with His Atoning Work—Nor with the New Testament Descriptions of His Work—Argued from the Socinian and Unitarian Conceptions of Christ—From His Statement that Justice, the Duty of Civil Government, is a Weightier Matter than Tithing, the Support of the Church—From His Preaching—From the Sermon on the Mount—His Followers Must Sympathize with Him —Four Objections Answered..... 34

CHAPTER V.

EXPEDIENCY VS. RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Righteousness Exalteth a Nation—Is Generally Disbelieved—Expediency Cannot Teach the Higher Law—Argued from Experience—From the Nature of the Argument—From the Personal Interests of the Students —National Honor not the Same as National Righteousness—The Church a Worshiper of Expediency—Women as Students of the Higher Law—All Can Learn It—The Root of Political Billingsgate..... 42

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST DUTY OF CHRISTIANS

Is to Learn the Higher Law—The Best Proof of the Inspiration of the Bible is its Social Effects—Teachings of the Bible about Politics Very Plain—Its Political Study will Produce Unity—It must be Studied Reverently— And Thoroughly—The Duty Argued from I Timothy— The Neglect of it Produces Irreligion..... 47

CHAPTER VII.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE CHURCH.

The Bible in the Common Schools—The Neglect to Study it Politically is Sinful—Indignation Caused by this Statement—The Great Sin of Our Ministry and Church

—Palliations—The Principle Argued from the Doctrine of Faith—From Revelation 22:18-19—From the Parable of the Vineyard—Ministers Should Study their Bibles before Trying to Preach Politics..... 53

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUTY OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Is Only to Do Justice—Objections to this Assertion: First, That it Should Promote the General Welfare—Reply, Doing Justice is the Best Way to Do This—Secondly, That Government Should Secure Life, the Means of Subsistence, to All its Citizens—Reply, It Cannot Do it Without Destroying Personal Independence—Thirdly, That to Secure Liberty to the People the Government Must Support Them—Reply, A Definition of Liberty... 61

CHAPTER IX.

SOCIALISM.

Edward Bellamy's Description of It—Mr. Jones' Definition —Is Impracticable Now—Reason for Being an Esthetic Socialist—Arguments for Socialism Answered—First, from the Trusts—Secondly, from the Public Ownership of Natural Monopolies—Thirdly, from the Evils of Competition—And, Fourthly, from Co-operation..... 69

CHAPTER X.

"HEBREW, JUSTICE, JUSTICE!"

Bible Arguments Against Socialism—First, the Silence of Scripture—Secondly, the Bible Name for Civil Rulers—Thirdly, Proof Texts—Fourthly, the Character of Christ's Reign on Earth—Argued also from Conscience —From the Common Law—From Reason—From the Limitations of Human Government..... 76

CHAPTER XI.

"LIKE PEOPLE, LIKE PRIEST."

Civil Government Derives its Authority from God—Truth Always Useful — Social Contract Theory

Unfounded—Why Our Church Government is Pure—And Our Civil Government is Corrupt—How to Purify It—The Truth Proved by the Nature of Government; by the Declaration of Independence; by Most Written Constitutions; by Coins, and by Scripture..... 83

CHAPTER XII.

THE PEOPLE ARE THE JUDGES.

The People are the God-Appointed Judges to Decide between Right and Wrong in Public Affairs—Argued from the History of Moses—And of Samuel—And from the Debates and War about Slavery—And from the Need of a Strong Government—And from the Possession of Consciences by All—Corollaries, Referendum, etc.—The Wickedness of Lying to the People, and of the Intimidation and Bribery of Voters..... 92

CHAPTER XIII.

THE IDEAL WOMAN.

Woman Suffrage Argued from the History of Samuel—Are Women People?—Is there any Better Way of Hearing them in Political Matters than through the Ballot?—Shall we Disobey God?—Have Women any Sense?—Their Clearer Moral Judgment Fits them to be Judges—The Ideal Woman..... 101

CHAPTER XIV.

TAXING HONESTY—NATIONAL DEBTS.

A Solemn Oath—How the Tax Assessor Regarded It—What Juries and Courts Think of It—Taxing Honesty—Encouraging Profanity—All Should Pay Taxes—Proved by Christ's Example and Command, Paul's Command and the Practice of the Church—And Citizens Should Pay Party Expenses—National Debts Forbidden by God—Would Help to Preserve Peace—Repudiation Wrong... 108

CHAPTER XV.

MORE ABOUT TAXES.

Taxes Should Be Light—Bible Proof—A Nation's Glory is the Well-being of its People—Indirect Taxes are Unjust—And Loathsome to Christ—Because they are Collected from the Wants and not from the Wealth of the People—Foster Political Corruption—Are a Heavy Burden—The Impossibility of Taxing Personal Property Justly—The Just Taxes..... 116

CHAPTER XVI.

IMPORT DUTIES.

Free Trade is Commanded by God—Through the Unity of Mankind—Through Nature—Through God's Will that All Nations Should Live in Peace—Import Duties are Unjust—And are Necessarily Mingled with Political Corruption—We Must Choose between Christ and Party. 125

CHAPTER XVII.

ABOUT MONEY.

Every Civilized Country Must Create its Own Money—Value and Utility Different—Money a Tool to Exchange Property—Essential to Civilization—When is Money Honest?—Every Country Should Provide Honest Money for its Own People—By Keeping General Prices Stable—The Wickedness of Dishonest Money—Bible Texts—Money Should not be Redeemable in Gold..... 132

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SILVER QUESTION.

Are Political Party Questions Outside of God's Dominion?—The Demonetization of Silver is Sinful—Because it is Unjust—Because it is not Listening to the Voice of the People—God Commands the Free Coinage of Silver through Nature—And through History—The Blindness of the People about this Sin—God or the Party; Which?—Repentance the Only Salvation—Righteousness the Best Policy..... 142

CHAPTER XIX.

USURY, OR INTEREST.

The Same in Morals and Economics—Is Wicked—Condemned by Every Definition of Money—Is Extortion—Is the Greatest Robbery—Will Destroy Our Civilization—Excuses All Other Oppression—Discourages Industry—The Hypocrites are the Church's Worst Foes..... 151

CHAPTER XX.

THE BIBLE ON USURY.

Condemned by Exodus 22:25—By Leviticus 25:35-38—By Deuteronomy 23:19-20—Not Justified by Matthew 25:27 and Luke 19:23—Condemned by Psalm 15:3—By Ezekiel 18:8, 13, 17, and Chapter 22:12—By Nehemiah 5:1-13—The Distinction Between Business and Benevolent Loans is Fanciful—Government Should Discourage Usury—By Refusing to Enforce Contracts to Pay Interest—By Excluding Newspapers Containing Usurious Advertisements from the Mails—By Providing Honest Money—Postal Savings Banks..... 159

CHAPTER XXI.

GOD'S LAND GRANTS.

Does the Pastor's Hypocrisy Justify that of the Layman?—The Old Testament Treats of Land Tenures—God the Paramount Owner of All Land—He Gives it to Individuals—His Grants of Land are Conditional—The Condition is that it shall be so Used as to Best Promote Man's Welfare—That Means: Small Estates—Civil Government Must Assist—Of the Plans Proposed the Single Tax is the Best—It Executes Itself—Is a Just Tax—Hinders no Industry—Will Help the "Land-Poor"—The Power of Religious Sincerity..... 169

CHAPTER XXII.

LABOR'S BOOK.

The Cure of Skepticism—Laborers are God's Children—All Have a Right to Work—None Should Live Without

Work—Government Should Not Diminish the Wages of Labor—Women Should Do Woman's Work, and Men Man's Work—Manual Work is Christ-like—The Fourth Commandment is a Labor Law—Seven Proofs of this Assertion—False Notions about the Sabbath..... 181

CHAPTER XXIII.

NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL MONOPOLIES.

The Difference between Them—The Private Ownership of Some Natural Monopolies Would Shock All—The Private Ownership of Any is Politically Corrupting—Monopolies from their very Nature Should Belong to the State—The Eighth Commandment Forbids the Private Ownership of Any Natural Monopoly—Because it is Impossible to Ascertain what is a Just Price for its Service—Illustrated by the Indianapolis Street Cars—But when Publicly Owned their Charges are Substantially Just..... 192

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RAILROADS.

The Principle stated in the Last Chapter Illustrated by the Railroads—The Railroad Fares and Freight Charges are Arbitrary—They are Unjust to their Hands—Treat Shippers Dishonestly—Create the Trusts—Discriminate between Localities—Crowd the People into the Cities—Corrupt their Managers—Rob the Government—Corrupt Politics—Because their Private Ownership is a Violation of the Law, "Thou Shalt not Steal"—Public Ownership would Cure these Evils—Government Purchase Easy..... 199

CHAPTER XXV.

THE TRUSTS.

Not Love, but Justice, is the Remedy for the Evils of Our Civilization—The Existence of Trusts is a Violation of

the Law "Thou Shalt not Steal"—Trusts the Fruits of Wicked Laws, while Natural Monopolies are the Result of Invention and Progress—Their Charges are Arbitrary —Department Stores—To Kill the Trusts, Repeal the Wicked Laws—The Unjust Taxes—The Dishonest Ownership of Natural Monopolies—And Provide Honest Money—Are we for Christ or against Him? 205

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

Its License is Forbidden by Every Sound Principle of Sociology—By the Higher Law—By All the Principles Established in this Book that are Applicable to It..... 212

INDEXES.

I. A LIST OF THE PRINCIPLES AFFIRMED IN THIS VOLUME 221

II. ANALYTICAL INDEX 223

III. TOPICAL INDEX 225

IV. TEXTUAL INDEX 229

Uncle Sam's Bible.

CHAPTER I.

CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION.

"We have called on you, Brother Jones," said Mr. John Smith, a merchant of Browntown, Tennessee, "to ask your opinion about our social conditions. The times are hard. The property of the country is concentrating into fewer hands. Class distinctions are growing stronger. You and I can remember the condition of the people before the war. There is a great change, and it is a very sad one. Knowing that you have thought much about these things, we wish to talk with you."

The Jones farm-house, into which Mr. Smith, his wife, his daughter Jenny and John Robinson, Esq., a young lawyer from Massachusetts who had recently settled in the neighborhood, had just entered, was on the edge of Browntown, a thriving railroad town in Tennessee. It was a cottage of six rooms, with a long porch in front.

The Rev. Jacob Jones, the person addressed, was about fifty-four years old, had received a good education

in high school, college and theological seminary, and had had a varied ministerial experience as pastor, evangelist and editor. He was a book-worm, near-sighted, absent-minded, an interesting preacher, and about five feet ten inches tall when he straightened himself.

The Smiths were the leading family in the Covenant Church in Browntown, of which Mr. John Robinson was also a prominent member. Mr. and Mrs. Smith taught the two Bible classes for men and women. Miss Jenny Smith had an interesting class of girls, and Mr. Robinson one of boys. Mrs. Smith was president of the ladies' aid society; Miss Jenny was secretary of the ladies' missionary society, and Jack Robinson was the leader of the Christian Endeavor Society. The Smiths were of course Democrats, but Miss Jenny had departed from the family faith, had become a party Prohibitionist and had joined the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Jack Robinson was a Republican.

Parson Jones welcomed his visitors.

"The Republicans promised us better times," said Mrs. Smith, "but I see little difference. If anything, the times are harder."

"I cannot see that things are any better in a Democratic state or under a Democratic administration," Mr. Robinson replied. "They said, 'Turn the rascals out,' but it seems to me that there were just as many rascals in office as before."

"Prohibition will make things better if it ever comes," sighed Miss Smith. "There are no rogues in my party."

"But Prohibition is no nearer now than it was in the fifties," replied Mr. Smith. "And if your party ever gains power the rascals will flock into it."

"So we have come to you, Parson Jones, to learn what you think is the remedy for our ills," Jack Robinson said. "We know that you have thought long and deeply about these matters; and we hope that you will help us to the truth."

"I have indeed spent time and strength and money on these problems," replied the parson, "and I shall be very glad indeed to help you. But the subject cannot be settled in a half-hour chat. If we begin I hope that we will have sufficient perseverance to finish."

"We are all quite in earnest," replied Mr. Smith.

"We ought to be," said Miss Jenny; "for there is no question so important to all of us."

"The hard times affect the prosperity of the church," added Mrs. Smith. "Twenty years ago everybody in Browntown went to church. Now two-thirds of the people are non-attendants. Although the population has trebled, the churches are not so well attended now as they were then."

"All these, our personal interests, our regard for those who will come after us, our love for our country and our love for our church," said Jack Robinson, "should make us persevere."

"Go a little deeper, my friends," said Parson Jones, "and say that our love for Christ should make us study the problems of our civilization till we have solved them; for he was profoundly interested in the welfare of men; he called himself 'the son of man'; he said that he came to establish the kingdom of God on earth. If we care nothing for what affects the happiness of all the people, if we joke about political corruption, if we abandon the study of social problems as matters too hard for us, if we refuse to spend and be spent in intro-

ducing a better state of society, we lack the spirit of Christ."

"Then you think more religion is what is needed?" asked Mrs. Smith.

"Yes and no," replied Mr. Jones. "If all the people were converted, joined the churches, and attended them regularly, it would make very little difference in our condition if other things remained as they are now. They are wrong who say, 'Make all the people Christians and then we shall have a Christian civilization.' Something more than sound lumber is needed to build a house: there must be a plan, and the lumber must be properly fitted and nailed. So it takes more than Christian people to make a Christian civilization. The laws, the customs of business, must first be Christianized."

"The house will be no better than the lumber it is built of," said Miss Jenny.

"Without the aid of the carpenter it will be merely a lumber pile," added Jack. "A house built of sods, in Nebraska fashion, would be a better residence."

"The conversion of the people will not suffice," continued Mr. Jones. "This is, I fear, merely an excuse that ministers and others use to avoid the trouble of studying our problems. Legislation and taxation and currency need to be converted. A Christian man, obeying unchristian laws, paying unchristian taxes, using unchristian currency, leads an unchristian life.

"We need a religion that will Christianize our laws and taxes, our trusts and monopolies, our politics and parties, our currency and courts—that is, that will make all these conform to the Bible. The trouble is that our civilization is idolatrous—that in public affairs we worship false gods."

"We do not understand what you mean," Mrs. Smith exclaimed. "Ours is a land of Bibles and churches, and we cannot be called idolators."

"I feared that you would not understand this brief explanation," Mr. Jones replied, "and I will try to make myself better understood."

CHAPTER II.

THE HIGHER LAW.

"It will help us," Mr. Jones continued, "to write out the truths we establish. It will aid the memory and will prevent our going over and over the same road. Therefore I propose to state the first principle. Write, please:

"*Principle 1.— There is a higher law to which all human laws should conform. It is the law of God.*"

"This is a dangerous doctrine," Mr. Smith objected. "You and I, Mr. Jones, remember very well the abolitionists and how they prevented a peaceable settlement of the slavery question, and stirred up anger, with the doctrine of 'a higher law.' I am afraid of it."

"My father claimed to be a charter member of the Republican party," Jack Robinson interrupted, "but he said that he was never an abolitionist."

"Every truth may be abused," Mr. Jones argued; "nearly every truth has been abused. There is not a doctrine of our religion that has not been perverted, hardly a scientific or mathematical truth that has not led men into mistakes. The abolitionists asserted that an idea that was unknown to most ages and nations, that was not founded on the consciences of mankind, that was not established by science, that was unknown to the Scriptures, was a fundamental principle of the higher

law. But they were right on one point. There is a higher law, higher than any human sentiment, than the ordinances of legislatures and Congress, above even the decisions of the Supreme Court."

"Of course the law of God is above all human laws," said Mrs. Smith. "There can be no dispute about that."

"I think that there is something on the subject in Blackstone," Jack Robinson remarked.

"I have a copy which I bought and read when I thought I would be a lawyer," said Mr. Jones. "Charley, please fetch it." For Mr. Jones' three boys, as well as Mrs. Jones, were listening to the talk.

"But what has the law of God to do with the tariff or the currency or the trusts?" asked Miss Jenny.

"Can we suppose that God knows nothing about such matters?" Mr. Jones inquired.

"Certainly not," Miss Jenny replied. "Such an idea is inconsistent with all our ideas of the Deity."

"Can we suppose that he is indifferent to them, cares nothing about them, has no will about them?" Mr. Jones asked again.

"I never thought of that," Miss Jenny mused. "I hardly know how to answer. I always supposed that his great desire was that men should be holy."

"God made all things," said George, Mr. Jones' youngest boy, "and God takes care of all things."

"God's work of providence," Jake, the oldest boy, said, "is his most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures and all their actions."

Smiling at these interruptions, Miss Jenny continued: "Yes, I suppose that God is interested in all national affairs and approves or disapproves of all laws, taxes,

tariffs, etc. He is the God of nations as well as of individuals."

"Put it stronger, Jenny," exclaimed her father. "He cares about the welfare of men; and as political events affect their welfare, he must be very much interested in them. To suppose otherwise would be to doubt his love."

Meanwhile Charley had returned with Blackstone, and Mr. Robinson had found the passages he wanted. Before he could read them, Miss Jenny asked, "Who is Blackstone?"

"He is the master," replied Mr. Robinson, "of the common law on which all statute law, both here and in England, rests. He is an acknowledged authority. The passages I thought of are in Book I of his Commentaries, pages 38 to 44. Let me read them:

" 'Man, considered as a creature, must necessarily be subject to the laws of the Creator, for he is a dependent being.'

" 'As man depends absolutely upon his Maker, it is necessary that he should in all points conform to his Maker's will.'

" 'The law of nature, being coeval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the world, in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority mediately or immediately from this original.'

" 'The revealed law is of infinitely more authority than that ethical system which is framed by moral writers and denominated the natural law; because one is the law of nature expressly declared to be so by God himself; the other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, we imagine to be that law.'

" 'Upon these two foundations, the law of nature and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, no human law is to be suffered to contradict them.' "

"Is that law?" asked Mr. Smith.

"Unquestionably it is," said Mr. Robinson. " 'The seat of law is the breast of God.' "

"I notice," said Mr. Jones, "that in one extract Blackstone says that man 'should in all points conform to God's will.' But elsewhere he says that 'no human law is to be suffered to contradict' the law of nature and the law of revelation. It does not seem to me that the two phrases mean the same. A law might not conform with God's law and yet might not contradict it. Which is Blackstone's meaning?"

"He means," Jack answered, "that they should conform to God's law, for in the very passage in which he uses the word 'contradict' he says that all human laws 'depend' upon the law of nature and the law of revelation, that is, upon God's law."

"The phrase 'not contradict' seems more accurate to me," Mr. Smith said, "because many human laws have no relation to the divine law. If the civil laws do not contradict the law of God, that is all that can be required of them."

"We lawyers," Jack Robinson said, "go further than that. We hold that human justice is founded on the justice of God."

"I remember a case in point," said Mrs. Smith, coming up, like a good wife, to the defense of her husband. "We owned a lot on Main Street and intended to build on it. Before we could do it the common council extended the fire limits, and as we could not build in

brick we sold the lot and bought the place where we live now. There is nothing in the law of God about fire limits or frame houses. All that can be said for the municipal ordinance is that it does not contradict God's law."

"On the contrary," Jack replied, "it conforms to the divine law and is founded on it. The law of God forbids our injuring each other or what tends to do it. In the judgment of the common council the erection of frame houses on Main Street would endanger other property."

"This is the doctrine of Scripture," the parson asserted. "It calls rulers judges and the act of ruling judging. Thus we have the Book of Judges. The word itself contains the whole science of sociology or government. The duty of the state or government, its whole duty, its only end and object, is to judge and decide what the law of God requires at a given time and place. When it does this it has the respect and love of the people; when it does or tries to do more than this it ceases to be either respected or loved."

"But do not the theologians divide the law between the moral and positive precepts?" Mr. Smith inquired. "Corresponding to this, must we not say that some human laws are the expression of the mere will of the legislature?"

"What is the distinction?" asked Miss Jenny.

"The moral precepts forbid things wrong in themselves," her father explained. "The positive precepts forbid things that are wrong merely because they are forbidden."

"The law of man knows no such distinction," the young lawyer replied. "In the settlement of questions in the courts we try to find the reason of the law, and it helps us to reach a just settlement of disputes. We

do not and cannot suppose that lawmakers would enact laws without some reason."

"The distinction in the divine laws helps us to study them," the minister said. "But this is the difference. In the moral precepts we can see the reason why they are made; but in the positive precepts we cannot. The difference is in us and not in the laws. All of God's commandments are holy and wise and good."

"I think of a good illustration," Miss Jenny exclaimed. "One day when I was little papa said to me, 'Daughter, do not stand so close to the fire.' He added directly, 'And do not touch the bottle on the mantle.' I knew at the time that my frock might catch fire and burn me to death, but I did not know for years what a poison arsenic is. One was a moral precept and the other a positive precept."

"Excellent," Mr. Jones said. "It will increase our regard for human law to remember that every law is an interpretation of the divine law, or an application of it to present circumstances."

"What, then, is the use of passing laws?" Mr. Smith objected. "All are acquainted with the law of God."

"But no one," said the lawyer, "is a competent judge in his own case."

"The deliberate judgment," the parson added, "of those elected to interpret and apply the law of God to our present conditions has more weight than any private opinion.

"I will add that any human law that is not founded on the divine law, that does not appeal to man's sense of right and justice, is generally weak, is very apt to do harm, frequently creates lawlessness, and always tends to diminish respect for government and love of country."

CHAPTER III

THE BEST LAW BOOK.

"It is growing late," Mrs. Smith reminded her husband.

"We have time for one more statement," said Mr. Jones. "Please write the second principle:

"*Principle 2.—The Bible is the surest and plainest means of learning the higher law of nations.*"

"Blackstone says the same," said the lawyer, when he had copied the principle into his note-book. "I will read from Book I, pages 41 and 42:

" 'Providence, in compassion to the frailty, the imperfection and the blindness of human reason, hath been pleased, at sundry times and in divers manners, to discover and enforce its laws by an immediate and direct revelation. The doctrines thus revealed we call the revealed or divine law, and they are to be found only in the Holy Scriptures. These precepts, when revealed, are found, upon comparison, to be really a part of the original law of nature, as they tend in all their consequences to man's felicity. But we are not from thence to conclude that the knowledge of these truths was attainable by reason in its present corrupted state; since we find, until they were revealed, they were hid from the wisdom of ages. As, then, the moral precepts of this law are indeed of the same origin with those of the law of nature, so their intrinsic obligation is of equal strength and perpetuity. Yet undoubtedly the revealed law is of

infinitely more authenticity than that moral system which is framed by ethical writers and denominated the natural law; because one is the law of God, expressly declared to be so by God himself; the other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, we imagine to be that law. If we could be as certain of the latter, both would have equal authority, but, till then, they can never be put in any competition together.' "

"I thought," said Mrs. Smith, "that the Bible was a religious book."

"One meaning of religious," her husband replied, "is conscientious. We certainly need more conscience in politics."

"Enlightened conscience, if you please," interjected the preacher. "Perverted conscience, ignorant conscience, will do only harm in politics; and the best means to enlighten and inform the conscience is the Bible."

"Does the Bible," Miss Jenny asked, "throw any light upon national or political questions, upon the problems of our civilization?"

"As God wishes man to be happy," Mr. Jones answered, "he would not, indeed could not, refuse or neglect to give him information, in any revelation he might make, upon those subjects with which man's happiness is so closely joined.

"When we examine the Bible we find it is composed of two parts which are quite unlike. One part, although it refers occasionally to national life, deals chiefly with individuals. This part contains the books of Job and the Song of Solomon, and all of the New Testament except Revelation. The other part of the Bible, although it refers to the individual life and most of it may be applied to individuals, deals mainly with the national life. It contains the five books of Moses,

the historical books, the prophetical books and the last book in the New Testament, Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. In it are thirty-nine of the sixty-six books of the Bible, 833 out of 1254 pages of an English Bible. The origin and growth of a nation and its laws are recorded by Moses. The history of its prosperity and adversity is given in the books that follow. The prophets are inspired statesmen, and the prophecies contain their advice and their remonstrances to the nation. Revelation gives the world's history to its end. In this part of the Scripture there is a sociology unequaled and unrivaled. Moses was a statesman who formed out of debased peasants a nation that has outlived all others. Isaiah was the most sublime of all poets. Daniel was the prime minister of two oriental empires, and John was the apostle closest to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Christians do not read nor understand nor love this part of the Bible, which is two-thirds of the whole, as they should.

"Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes have a mixed character. They contain the sentiments of David and Solomon as individuals and as statesmen."*

"Why," asked Mr. Smith, "do not Christians understand and love the prophecies?"

"Because they have a wrong idea of them," replied the minister. "They do not realize that the law and the prophets are dealing with politics, are teaching sociological truths, and that they refer to personal salvation only by application. If we made a similar error about the Psalms and the Gospels, if we taught that they

*Dr. S. C. Dodds, of Pittsburg, Pa., will accept the author's thanks for a suggestion about the Psalms.

referred mainly and chiefly to affairs of state, it would spoil them for us. Take the twenty-third psalm for an example. 'Shepherd,' in the Scriptures, often means a civil ruler. If we read the psalm, 'The Lord is my magistrate,' it would be as obscure to us as any chapter in Jeremiah is to the average reader.

"The political or sociological reading of the sociological or political portions of the Bible will make them new to us. There are ripe fruits in them to be had for the plucking. Their leaves will heal the nation. Their doctrines will put an end to poverty and crime, to pauperism and to soul-destroying luxury, and will place all the people in such a position that the Gospel can reach them and save their souls."

"Would you object," asked the lawyer, "to the application of these portions of Scripture to personal conduct?"

"Certainly not," the minister answered, "no more than I should object to the application of texts in the Gospels and Epistles to national affairs. Much that is true of nations is true of and can be wisely applied to the citizens composing them; and conversely, much that is true of individuals is true of the nations which they compose. But let us never forget that the Bible contains the higher law of nations, and is meant for nations as well as for individuals."

"Are there any other guides to the higher law besides the Bible?" was a question from Miss Jenny.

"Very many," was the answer. "I will mention some: Conscience. Reason shows what agrees with the higher law in being beneficial. Nature is a revelation of the Creator. The law of nations. The laws of different states and cities, of the churches, of

clubs and societies. Parliamentary law. History. Statistics; but though figures, like letters, never lie, yet lies contained in figures are harder to be seen by the inexpert than those contained in words. Books on political economy or sociology. Political speeches and articles. Proverbs. Poetry. General literature."

"Must I study all these," asked Mrs. Smith, "to learn the higher law?"

"They may help," answered Mr. Jones, "but the Bible is the surest guide to it."

"How do they help?" Mr. Smith asked.

"They illustrate and enforce the teachings of the Bible," replied the preacher. "But they have great imperfections. First, they contradict each other. Proverbs can be quoted on any side of any question. Writers and speakers refute each other. Laws, even of the same state, conflict, and the laws of different states differ widely. Secondly, they are obscure. The lessons of history are read differently. Statistics are perilous to the unlearned. Finally, they are frequently erroneous. Consciences are perverted by self-interest. Nature is deformed by man. Laws are dictated by avarice. Philosophers are fallible and poets fanciful. The Bible alone is sure and true."

So ended the first night's discussion. Mr. Smith invited the preacher and his wife to tea on the following Tuesday night; and the guests left, the married people in advance.

"We had an instructive evening," Miss Smith remarked to Mr. Robinson.

"Very," was the reply. "Do you know that I have admired your courage in joining the Woman's Christian

Temperance Union? It must have been hard for one so young, and—excuse me—so lovely."

"It is hard," replied the girl, blushing in the dark. "You know that prejudice against the Union, but you do not know how strong it is among the women."

"No, I suppose not," the young man answered, "and yet it is merely an expression of the interest that every woman should feel in the welfare of our country; for the women especially suffer from the evils of our civilization. The men can protect themselves better."

"I agree with you," was the reply. "The women and the children are the greatest sufferers—for example, the drunkard's family."

"And yet, thoughtless as the men are about these evils, the women seem to be more thoughtless."

"You are right, I fear. But how any Christian, any follower of Jesus, who went about doing good, can be indifferent to the laws that are making tramps and paupers and drunkards, I cannot imagine."

It was a hard problem for the two to solve, and they did not solve it in their mile walk to Browntown.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST AND REFORM.

On the following Tuesday, November 7, 1897, when Mr. Jones arrived at the Smith residence he found the Rev. Dr. Luther Calvin Wesley, pastor of the Covenant Church, in the parlor with the Smith family. After the usual greetings and an apology for the non-appearance of Mrs. Jones, Mr. Smith said:

"As tea is not quite ready and Mr. Robinson has not come, would you mind telling us how you became interested in social reform?"

"Certainly not," Mr. Jones replied. "I suppose I inherited it from my mother. She was raised on a farm in a New England village (for she was a descendant of one of the early settlers who, the family tradition says, owned the site of Boston when it was an elder swamp), and afterwards she lived in the city. Thus she watched our development for sixty years, and she was always talking about our 'civilization.'

"Fifteen years ago I became pastor of the church at Washingtonville. A mile south of the village was a community unlike any I had ever seen, extremely poor, but entirely honest. Forty families lived on a tract of land that would not have made a good farm. Each family owned an acre of ground and a log shanty. They did not work and they did not steal. I was called to minister to them, and became much interested in them.

"A few years later I discovered that political economy is not a dead but a live science. Having leisure, I wrote a series of sermons on the sociological teachings of the Bible, which I afterwards expanded into a book. No New York publisher would publish these Bible truths. I asked my noble wife if I should publish them myself, telling her that it would probably reduce my professional income. She told me to publish God's truth. Since then I have had leisure to study these questions, for, of course, I have no church."

"It is a pity," Dr. Wesley said, "that you should waste your life."

"No life is wasted," Mr. Jones replied, "that reveals to the world Bible truths that have been forgotten."

Then Mr. Robinson came in and the tea bell rang. It is not necessary to describe the supper; for everybody knows what a good housekeeper Mrs. Smith is.

After tea the party reassembled in the parlor. The principles already written were read. Dr. Wesley entirely approved them, and Mr. Jones was asked to proceed.

"Write, then," he said, "the third principle, as follows:

"*Principle 3.—One part of the mission of Christ is to propagate throughout the world the political principles of the Old Testament.*"

"I protest," exclaimed Dr. Wesley. "Christ came to save sinners."

"How better can he save sinners," asked Mr. Jones, "than by introducing public righteousness? Can you preach successfully to a man who is full of whisky or empty of bread? Did you ever know a genuine tramp to be converted and join the church?"

"No," Dr. Wesley admitted, "I never did and never expect to. Paul fully describes the mission of Christ. He calls him 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' "

"The lowest view taken of Christ admits him to be a great teacher," Mr. Jones replied. "The young ruler who went away sorrowful from him called him 'Good Master.' Nicodemus said, 'We know that thou art a teacher come from God.' All, even those who deny his divinity, acknowledge him to be the greatest teacher of men. Taking this lowest view of Christ, is it conceivable that he was ignorant of the truths of sociology or that he should refuse or neglect to teach them?

"On the two principles already accepted by us the case is stronger. If there is a higher law, and if it is taught in the Old Testament, Christ could not refuse to teach and enforce it.

"As to the quotation from Romans, does Paul, could Paul, describe in one verse the whole work of Christ? The Epistles give us one view of the mission of Christ, the Prophets give us another view of it; to understand it fully we must combine both views.'

"But the view in the Epistles is the most important," rejoined Dr. Wesley.

"Do the Scriptures anywhere authorize us to compare the doctrines of God and to say that one is less important than another?" Mr. Jones argued. "Was not this one error of the Pharisees? They compared the precepts of the law and decided that the paying of tithes was more important than justice, mercy and faith, and they had many plausible arguments to support their opinion; for without support the ordinances of religion could not be sustained and the knowledge of God might perish."

"In that very passage," Mr. Robinson said, "Christ said that justice, mercy and faith were weightier matters of the law."

"He alone could decide such a point; he never authorized men to sit in judgment on the law of God," was the reply of Mr. Jones. "But in saying that justice, which is a function of the state or government, is a weightier matter than the support of religion, he would lead us to conclude that the view of his mission contained in the Prophets is as important and necessary as the view of his work found in Romans and Galatians. He came to justify and sanctify sinners, as Paul states; but he came also to reform civil government, according to Isaiah. We are not to subordinate one of these objects to the other."

"Do not the two objects conflict?" asked Mrs. Smith.

"They would if Christ, like Mahomet, had tried to reform civil abuses by force, by the sword," was the response. "But he reforms nations, as he does individuals, by moral and spiritual means. His two aims help each other. When the masses see that Christ is the great leader in the reform of the abuses of government which are oppressing them, they will come to him also for justification and sanctification. When men see that Christ's teaching is practical, that it abolishes trusts, secures an honest and just currency, removes oppressive taxes and enables them to carry on business more safely and honestly, there will be as many men as there are women in the churches."

"Theoretical, Brother Jones," said Dr. Wesley. "Your proof?"

"Matthew, after giving an account of the birth of Jesus and the work of John the Baptist," was the reply,

"says from that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' A little further on we read: 'Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness.' Mark's account begins in the same manner: 'Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.' Luke begins his account of Christ's work by telling how he read in the synagogue at Nazareth the prophecy of Isaiah: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives [prisoners], and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised [those in jail], to preach the acceptable year [the year of jubilee] of the Lord.' We ought not to allegorize these all away. Christ's work is to introduce the kingdom of heaven—of God."

"But it is a spiritual kingdom," responded Dr. Wesley.

"It is a queer kingdom if it has nothing to do with taxation and currency and the making and execution of laws," the lawyer interjected.

"Certainly it is a spiritual kingdom," replied Mr. Jones, "as spiritual in the political as in the individual sphere, both as regards theological and political truths. He uses the same methods, the awakening and the instruction of conscience, to reform public wrongs and personal sins."

"I see," Dr. Wesley acknowledged, "that the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom does not conflict with its political aims. Please proceed."

"As each president at the beginning of his administra-

tion delivers an inaugural address," Mr. Jones said, "so Jesus, after appointing the apostles, delivered the Sermon on the Mount. First he describes, in the Beatitudes, the characteristics of loyal citizens or subjects, and then, at once, states the object of his work. Miss Jenny, please read Matthew 5:17-20."

She read:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. . . . For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

"You notice," Mr. Jones said, "that Christ states the object of his coming into the world to be to fulfill, to complete, carry into effect, perform the law and the prophets. These refer mainly to national affairs, deal chiefly with political problems. This is the object of his first coming, not of his second. 'I am come,' he says, not 'I will come,' 'to fulfill' 'the law and the prophets' —to carry into effect the sociological truths contained in them that will end all war, stop all oppression and abolish all poverty that is not the result of the vice or sickness of the individual.

"The true follower of Christ will sympathize with him, will take part in his work. Those who do not are not true followers. The scribes and Pharisees sought only to save themselves, their families, friends and disciples. Pharisee means separatist. Instead of trying to

save their nation or the world they separated themselves from it. Such had no part in the kingdom Christ was setting up."

"Can any true Christian," asked Miss Jenny, "give his vote and influence to a political party that sustains the saloons?"

"Or to a party," added her father, "that favors a currency that is robbing debtors and destroying industry?"

"What about helping a party that gives favors to trusts?" the lawyer added.

"Many, whose piety cannot be doubted," Dr. Wesley responded, "do vote with such parties."

"The question of personal responsibility," Mr. Jones said, "will be duly considered, but now I wish to call your attention to the power of the agency for political and social reform which Christ inaugurated on the Mount of Blessings. Knowledge without zeal is as weak as the classic philosophy; zeal without knowledge is mischievous. But the sociological wisdom of God himself, revealed to us in the law and the prophets, made alive by the love of Christ, who died for us, is a force that, but for the blindness of Christians, would speedily abolish all oppression, all war and all poverty."

"'The poor ye have with you always,'" quoted the pastor.

"As long as there is sickness and death," replied Mr. Jones, "there will be invalids, widows and orphans; and as long as men are idle or intemperate they should suffer for their vices. But when Christians understand the mission of Christ and co-operate in it, none will seek for work in vain, every workman will have full wages, and every family will sit under its own vine and fig-tree."

"But Christ said, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' " Mr. Smith objected.

"So he did," the preacher replied; "but it was in answer to Pilate, whose only idea of royal authority lay in swords. He affirmed at the same time that he was a king, and had a kingdom of truth—a spiritual kingdom."

"He refused to be a judge or a divider," objected Mr. Smith.

"Because he had never been elected or appointed a judge," Mr. Jones explained. "For him to have assumed the office would have been a usurpation, an invasion of the rights of the people."

"He said, 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' thus refusing to decide a political question," Dr. Wesley argued.

"He had no right to decide the question," Mr. Jones replied. "The decision of the question whom the people would obey belonged to the people; and Jesus was jealous of their rights. But his answer assures us that our political duties are as important, as holy, as sacred, as our religious duties."

CHAPTER V.

EXPEDIENCY VS. RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THE declaration that political duties are as sacred, holy and important as religious duties caused some surprise, but no one disputed it. After a pause, Mr. Jones said: "Please place in your note-books the fourth principle:

"*Principle 4. — Righteousness, conformity to the higher law, exalteth a nation.*"

"Surely it is not necessary to delay over this principle," said Dr. Wesley. "It is merely affirming that 'honesty is the best policy.' "

"Many business men do not believe that," said the merchant, "if we may judge by their actions."

"And few of our citizens," Mr. Jones said, "believe our fourth principle, if we can judge by the arguments addressed to them by the political speakers and writers. In the tariff discussion, for example, no one has ventured to affirm that protection is enjoined by God, and no one has proclaimed that all import duties are an abomination to the Lord. Yet if our God is interested in our welfare, one or the other is true. Only one argument has been used on both sides. The advocates of protection for eighty years have argued that it would enrich us, and for the same time its opponents have argued that it was impoverishing us. The debate has not advanced a step since my recollection."

"Why is that?" asked the lawyer.

"It arises from the nature of the argument," was the reply. "Whether a particular law has been profitable to the whole nation in the past only the experts can judge. Whether it is advantageous or disadvantageous at the present is a still harder question. Whether it will be beneficial or injurious in the future God only knows. This is one reason why our tariff debate has made no progress in forty years, and will make none in the next forty, if we continue to argue it in the same way.

"Another reason is that when the expediency of a law or tax is debated each class, each section, each individual, thinks first and mainly of its own interests. There are as many points of view as there are different interests. If you hitch four horses to the four corners of a carriage and whip them all, the carriage would make no progress. Indeed, it would be in danger of being torn in pieces. It is a fair illustration of our social and political condition."

"You will please except the Prohibition party from your condemnation," Miss Jenny said. "They look upon political questions from a moral standpoint."

"Yes, the majority of the members of both the Prohibition and the Liberty parties," Mr. Jones replied, "look at social questions in the fear of God. But they together are only a small minority of our people. And not all of them do it. I remember when the constitutional amendment forbidding saloons was before the voters of Tennessee, I argued the question before the people from the ground of expediency; for I then conscientiously thought that expediency, policy, was the rule ordained of God for the decision of public questions. But God has, I trust, forgiven my idolatry of expediency,

since the Holy Spirit made use of it, among other means, to show me the sacredness of political reform. But the majority of the voters in the other parties, more than nine-tenths of our people, still follow expediency as their guide in political questions."

"Please except also the Republican party," the Republican lawyer said. "In the last presidential election their chief argument was that the national honor required a sound currency."

"Was it?" Mr. Jones questioned. "Did they not tell the wage-earners that the remonetization of silver would diminish the purchasing power of their wages? And was not this an appeal to their self-interest? Besides, national honor is not the same as righteousness."

"Indeed!" all his hearers exclaimed at once.

"Honor has a double meaning. Sometimes it refers to obtaining our own self-respect, but oftener to obtaining glory from others. National honor is of the second kind. It requires consistency. Righteousness frequently demands repentance. Honor leads to pride, righteousness to humility. Honor seeks to exalt our nation above others; righteousness teaches that all are brethren. Honor makes us prefer our nation above others; righteousness puts all on an equality, and by doing this promotes the prosperity of all. Honor causes war; righteousness will bring universal peace. The standard of honor is human sentiment; the standard of righteousness is the Bible. National honor is another false god which the nations are worshiping. It is a nobler deity indeed than Mammon or expediency. But it brings the displeasure of Jehovah, who is jealous of his own glory."

"Can you not except the church from your charge of idolatry?" the pastor of the Covenant Church asked.

"In their families, in society, often in business, and nearly always in church matters," Mr. Jones answered, "the church members follow righteousness and try to conform their lives to the law of God. But in politics they agree with their fellow-citizens, vote with them, and are influenced by the same arguments."

"But the good citizenship movement in the Christian Endeavor Society——" began the leader of that body in the Covenant Church.

"Is a sign of progress, and an omen of hope," Mr. Jones interrupted. "But its scope is limited. As the society is composed of men of all parties, it has to avoid the questions which are in dispute between them. That is, it has to avoid all the moral questions, such as the currency and the tariff, which are prominently before the public—all the questions that are up for settlement."

"The Woman's Christian Temperance Union at least meets your approval," said its member.

"Certainly, and I earnestly approve of the Christian or good citizenship movement, so far as it goes," Mr. Jones said. "The W. C. T. U. is free from the limitations of the Y. P. S. C. E., because its members are not voters. But they are too modest. They do not discuss and agitate the political questions before the public, such as the currency, the tariff, the trusts, etc."

"We ladies are not supposed," Miss Jenny said, "to understand such questions."

"If they are questions of expediency," Mr. Jones replied, "you are right, for no one can understand them, as our experience shows. But if they are moral ques-

tions, questions of right or wrong, the women are well qualified to discuss them, for they have clear moral perceptions.

"This leads me to speak of another reason for adopting the fourth principle. All have the data of ethics. There is a Bible in every house. While none know and few can guess intelligently whether a proposed measure will be advantageous to the whole nation, every one can form an intelligent opinion as to whether it is right or wrong.

"The question of expediency makes every one think first and most of his own interests; but the question of righteousness leads all to turn their backs to this selfishness. Righteousness is stronger still, thank God, with the majority of our people, than self-interest. They will do more, endure more, give more for righteousness.

"This habit of thinking chiefly of self-interest in considering political questions is the cause of the scurrility which debases our political discussions and confuses our voters. Every candidate for office is a scoundrel. Every proposed measure is prompted by base motives. Charges and countercharges are made and repeated till the average citizen is utterly confused. If public questions were debated as moral problems this pernicious custom would disappear.

"For these reasons we cannot hope to make progress in the reform of the abuses that are afflicting our nation till we regard every public question solely as a moral question, a question of conformity or non-conformity to the will of God."

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST DUTY OF CHRISTIANS.

THERE was a lull in the conversation, and Mr. Smith put some wood and coal on the fire, which had died down. Dr. Calvin Wesley asked: "What is the next principle, Brother Jones?" The reply was:

"*Principle 5.—The first duty of all Christians is to study the Bible politically, in a reverent spirit and in a thorough manner.*"

Dr. Wesley, hiding a yawn with his hand, asked: "Of course it is not necessary to go into the evidences, but what to your mind, Brother Jones, is the strongest proof of the inspiration of the Bible?"

"Its political, industrial and social effects," was the answer. "Where there are most Bibles and the Sabbath is best observed, there we find higher wages, more liberty and more intelligence. This is true in every continent and every climate."

"I noticed the difference between Texas and Mexico in my trip south last winter," said Mr. Smith.

"There is the same difference," said Mr. Robinson, "between New England and lower Canada."

"I remarked it," Mr. Jones said, "in a summer vacation in Europe twenty years ago. The Rev. T. M. C. Birmingham, in his book 'Scriptural Politics,' has shown that the difference exists all over the world.

Wages are lowest in heathen lands and increase with every increase in the knowledge of the Bible."

"What is meant by the political study of the Bible?" Mrs. Smith inquired.

"Discovering what it teaches about the political questions of the day," replied Mr. Robinson.

"Is it not very hard," Mr. Smith suggested, "to do this?"

"I think not," was the reply of Mr. Jones. "The material is so abundant, and so plain, that the diligent and reverent student will have little trouble. There are ten texts forbidding oppression, I believe, for every one asserting the divinity of Christ or explaining the mode of justification."

"As many as that?" Dr. Wesley spoke.

"I have never counted them," Mr. Jones replied. "But some years ago I read through the Bible to see what it said about land, and I marked a passage bearing upon it on almost every page. There are nearly as many more illustrating the duties of civil government."

"You surprise me," said the pastor.

"There are many surprising things in the Bible," rejoined Parson Jones. "The political study of the Bible, I can assure you from my own experience, will make it a new and more interesting book to you."

"Will it not create the 'theologicum odium'—bigotry, political fanaticism?" Dr. Wesley objected.

"Why should Bible study have such an effect?" Mr. Jones answered. "On the contrary, the persecuting ages and churches have been marked by the absence of the study of the Bible. The study of the Bible makes us pity instead of hating those who are laboring under error."

"How, then, do you account for the bloody zeal of the Scottish covenanters?" Mr. Robinson asked. "They were Bible students."

"We look at them mostly in the novels of Scott, who was led by his political prejudices and the novelist's needs to exaggerate their peculiarities," the minister replied. "Their hatred they learned in the school of persecution, from Claverhouse, and not from Moses or Christ."

"But it will increase our political divisions," Mr. Smith said. "There are five hundred denominations in our land."

"Some make the fathers or tradition or modern culture," Mr. Jones explained, "an equal authority in religion with the Bible. But are not those who accept the Bible as the sole and sufficient religious guide substantially agreed as to what it teaches about the more important topics, about sin and redemption, faith and repentance, the Trinity and the Savior? As the Bible contains much more about sociology than about theology there is no reason to doubt that there will be a similar unanimity about the great questions of reform."

"I preached in Knoxville the other Sunday," Dr. Wesley remarked, "and while going down the aisle of the church one man told me that my sermon was a good Presbyterian sermon, another that it was a good Baptist sermon, and another that it was a good Methodist sermon."

"That reminds me of an incident in Johnson City," said Brother Jones. "I strolled one Wednesday night into a prayer-meeting; I did not know of what denomination it was, and I tried to guess. The hymn book had no denominational imprint, and from neither the

hymns, the prayers nor the exhortations could I form any opinion."

"It seems likely," said the merchant, "that the differences between Bible students in regard to practical matters would be fewer than about theoretical and doctrinal questions."

"What is the reverent study of the Bible?" asked Miss Jenny.

"The reverent Bible student," replied Mr. Jones, "will neither stand before the inspired men to dispute with them, nor above them to have them re-echo his sentiments, but will sit at their feet to learn of them. One sentence from them will outweigh all the books of merely human writers. For example, Malthus asserts that the evils of our civilization come from the increase of population. But to the reverent Bible student the command, 'Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth,' makes all the Malthusian literature a heap of rubbish.

"More than this, nearly every American has political preferences, inherited from honored parents and associated with friends. The reverent student will prefer the Bible to them."

"What is the thorough study of the Bible?" Miss Jenny asked.

"Such study of its politics as the church gives to the texts that bear on the plan of salvation and the character of the Savior," was the explanation. "It involves reading, reflection and discussion."

"What helps are there to such study?" the lawyer inquired.

"None, I am sorry to say," replied Mr. Jones. "It seems unfortunately to be the fate of the church to be

able to see only a part of the Savior's character and mission at a time. The Jewish rabbis could not see that Christ was to die, and the Christian teachers do not realize that Christ is to reign over the earth, do not see the force of their prayer, 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth.' All Bible dictionaries and commentaries are of some use. The works of Dr. Strong and Prof. Ely deal with the general spirit of Christianity, but do not explain the text."

"Where do you get the word 'first' from?" asked Dr. Wesley. "'The first duty of Christians is to study the Bible politically.'"

"From Timothy, 1:19—2:4," replied Mr. Jones. "Miss Jenny, please read it."

And she read from the large family Bible on the center table, in a clear, sweet voice, as follows:

"Some, concerning faith, have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."

"What is the connection?" asked Dr. Wesley.

"Prayer and study go together," began Mr. Jones.

"Yes, the missionary monthly," Miss Jenny interrupted him, "helps us to pray for the foreign missionaries. If we knew nothing about foreign missions we could not pray for them."

"Paul gives four reasons," Mr. Jones continued, "why Christians should be interested 'first of all' in the

question of civil rulers. Only in this way can they promote the salvation of all men. When we work and pray for the church we labor for a minority of the people. For our own sakes we should study the political teachings of the Bible and reform our politics. As they who live in a malarious district have fever and ague, so those who live in a corrupt civilization lead corrupt lives. We should do it also for the sake of the backsliders who have made shipwreck of the faith."

"How so?" asked Miss Jenny.

"I will illustrate," Mr. Jones replied. "A church member buys a house for two thousand dollars and pays one thousand down. The seller and buyer have an equal interest in the house. The purchaser is unable to pay the rest, and the seller forecloses the mortgage and takes the house. A wrong has been committed, and the ministers and church members tacitly approve it. Other church members labor for insufficient wages, and Christians utter no protest. Of course, they lose interest in religion."

"They are very unreasonable," Dr. Wesley remarked.

"Men suffering under wrong are never reasonable," Mr. Jones replied. "The fourth reason Paul gives is that this primary interest of Christians in politics is well pleasing to God our Savior, who wishes the salvation of all men."

CHAPTER VII.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE CHURCH.

Mrs. Smith had left the room a little while before, and she now returned with a basket of apples and several knives. After the apples had been enjoyed, Mr. Smith said:

"It seems to me that what we have heard to-night throws some light upon the question of reading the Bible in the public schools."

"If the Bible is at the basis of our industrial, social and political welfare," Dr. Wesley observed, "it is madness to banish it from our common schools."

Mr. Jones paid no attention to these remarks, but bent over the grate, absentmindedly warming his hands. He now sat up and said: "We have time, I suppose, for one more principle to-night. Please write it:

"*Principle 6.—Whoever consciously and intentionally rejects or neglects the political teachings of the Bible is guilty of a great sin, of which he should at once repent.*"

Dr. Wesley almost rose from his seat as he said: "I object to this, Brother Jones. I have three sermons to prepare every week. I have to visit my people. I have to keep abreast of current literature. Moreover, if I showed any active interest in these matters I should lose my position, and my family would suffer."

"It is more painful to me to say——" began Mr.

Jones, apologetically, but he was interrupted by Mr. Robinson, who said:

"It is as rough on the people as on the ministers. 'Like people, like priest.' "

"It is harder on the people," said Dr. Wesley, more quietly, "for they would lose much less by taking an interest in reform. With the ministry it is a question of bread and butter. I am glad, Jack, that you quote the old proverb correctly. The priests are what the people make them, what the people pay them to be."

"The reputation of a crank," Mr. Smith said, "is a disadvantage to any business man."

"A merchant's opinions don't affect the quality of his goods," said Mrs. Smith, "so that crankiness does not injure him as it does a clergyman."

"Exactly so," said Dr. Wesley, smiling on Mrs. Smith. "If I were to advocate Brother Jones' notions my invalid wife would lack some of the comforts her condition requires."

"Suppose we call them Bible doctrines," said the leader of the Y. P. S. C. E., "instead of 'Brother Jones' notions,' for I have not yet heard anything unsound."

"Have it your own way, Jack," replied the Doctor; "but I can't accept them."

"I recognize the limitations of the pulpit," Mr. Jones said, abstractedly, "but the ministers should not brag that they preach 'the whole counsel of God.' " Mr. Jones should not have said this, for only two Sundays before he had heard Dr. Wesley preach an eloquent and learned sermon from Paul's words: "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." But he only remembered it after he had spoken.

"The ministers by their ordination vows pledge them-

selves to follow the Bible," Mr. Robinson said. "In political matters they do not do it. They have perjured themselves."

"This is intolerable," exclaimed Dr. Wesley, rising from his seat and going to the door.

Good Mrs. Smith hastily interposed: "Dear Dr. Wesley, I am sure no one would intentionally hurt your feelings."

At the same time Miss Jenny said in a low tone to the lawyer: "I am surprised that you should insult our pastor."

Mr. Jones said quickly: "I assure you, my brother, that my language was not intended to be personal."

Mr. Robinson said the same, and, the others speaking kindly, the Doctor took his seat again and Mrs. Smith said to Mr. Jones: "Suppose you explain the principle which seems so offensive, and give your reasons for adopting it."

"Before doing so," Mr. Jones began, "let me say that it was with deep regret that I framed the sentence that condemns the church. I am a son of the church and a child of the Puritans. Two hundred and sixty-seven years ago my forefathers left their pleasant home in the west of England to live among wild men and wild beasts for the sake of the Gospel. The church contains the best people of the present age, as it did also in the time of Christ. It is a pain to me to see any fault in it, and much more to point it out. But you have asked me to tell you the way to reform the evils of our civilization, and I could not do it without mentioning the great sin of the church of to-day.

"If you will look at your note-books," Mr. Jones continued, "you will see that the act is described by two

words, 'rejection or neglect' of the political teachings of the Bible, and two words are used to describe the way in which the sin is committed—'consciously and intentionally.'

"Neglect of the Bible is as bad as rejection; so far as the result is concerned, it may be worse. The traveler who neglects to ask directions is worse off when he has lost his way than the one who has rejected the directions, for the latter may recall and follow them. Neglect shows less interest than rejection.

"The act of rejecting the political principles of the Bible must be conscious and intentional before it is an unpardonable sin. American Christians have done it unconsciously and unintentionally. The times of ignorance God winked at; but now he commands us to repent. In the days of the fathers who shaped the theology and the character of our various denominations —of Cotton Mather, of Roger Williams, of the Tennents, of Asbury, of Bishop White—we lived individual lives, we dwelt on separate farms, we raised most of what we consumed. I myself once talked with an old gentleman who told me that he went twice a year to my wife's grandfather's to make shoes for all the family, white and black, out of leather furnished to him. Then our people wore homespun. The fortune of each was in his own keeping; if he was frugal, industrious and temperate he prospered. In that age, when the character of our various churches was formed, it was natural that the individual bearings of the Gospel should be emphasized. All this is now changed. We lead social lives. No one wears homespun or consumes what he produces. The fortunes of none are now in their own keeping. A panic starting ten thousand miles away may impoverish

us after it has twice crossed the ocean. By his providence God now commands us to study the social aspects of the Gospel.

"You ask my reasons for believing this principle. The first is the doctrine of faith. Whoever consciously and intentionally neglects or rejects the word of God thereby declares that God is a liar and destroys all harmony and communion between himself and God. If he could enter heaven it would be misery for him. For example, if God says that the proper way to punish theft is by a double or a fourfold restitution, and I say that the proper way to punish it is by imprisonment, and do it consciously and intentionally, I do thereby put myself out of harmony with God and out of reach of his mercy."

"Pretty stiff doctrine!" muttered Dr. Wesley, very low.

But Mr. Smith, who was sitting next him, heard him and asked whether it was sound doctrine.

Dr. Wesley said: "He hasn't proved that God ordains restitution now."

"No, I have not," said Mr. Jones, who heard the answer, "but I put a case to you as a theologian: If God says anything, and I consciously and intentionally deny it, what then?"

"You would do it at your soul's peril," was the response.

"The second reason I have for believing the principle," continued Mr. Jones, "is the last warning in the Bible. Will you read it, Miss Jenny? Revelation 22: 18-19."

She read as follows:

"I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto

these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

"The words are plain and sure," Mr. Jones explained. "A large part of the Bible, over two-thirds, refers to national welfare. He who presumptuously neglects it does it, as Brother Wesley says, 'at his soul's peril.' For such neglect is virtually taking it from the Bible.

"The last reason I shall give—I could give many—is Isaiah's parable repeated by Christ. God has given to us a fair vineyard, reaching from the lakes to the gulf, and from ocean to ocean, over sea coast and mountain and prairie, yielding nearly every vegetable and mineral product that men can desire and embracing nearly every climate. He wants fruit from us. He has sent unto us many messengers: Moses the statesman, Samuel the seer, David the king, Solomon the wise man, Isaiah the poet, Daniel the prime minister, and last and best of all, his own Son—they have repeated his message in every form, in poetry and prose, in history and prophecy, in parables and proverbs. The fruit he wants is justice and righteousness. Instead of justice there is the oppression of trusts and monopolies, the extortion of usury and of unjust taxation, and instead of righteousness there is the cry of the poor and afflicted. If, instead of listening to the messengers of the lord of the vineyard, we deliberately turn our backs to them and shut our ears, what will he do?"

"He will miserably destroy the wicked husbandmen," said Miss Jenny, softly.

"God forbid," added Dr. Wesley as softly.

There was a long pause. It was growing late. Mr. Smith at length said, "We are making fine progress."

"We have laid the foundation," Mr. Jones said, "that there is a higher law, that it is in the Bible, and that it should be studied. We are now ready to study the question: What does the Bible say about politics?"

"I think it the most important question of our age," said Mr. Smith. His wife and daughter and Mr. Robinson agreed with him. Dr. Wesley was silent. After a hospitable debate it was agreed that they should meet at Mr. Jones' on the following Tuesday afternoon.

Dr. Wesley and Mr. Jones went away together and Mr. Robinson remained—perhaps to apologize further to Miss Jenny for his rudeness to her pastor.

As the two clergymen walked Dr. Wesley said: "I suppose you think that ministers should preach politics?"

"I do not," was the reply, "for several reasons. I will mention two. In the present state of Bible sociology discussion is more needed than oratory; and the pulpit does not allow debate. The other is that ministers cannot teach what they have never learned."

"What, then, would you have ministers do?" was the next question.

"First inform themselves about social questions and their Bibles; then get converted, believe God and their Bibles; and finally take up their crosses and follow Christ—make sacrifices for him. It is only what I have done; but I sometimes doubt whether I would have done it if I had foreseen what it involved."

"The expression of such sentiments," the courtly divine replied, "will make you disliked in the associa-

tion. Are you not afraid," he added, after a slight pause, "that your brethren will disfellowship you?"

"No, I think not," the other answered. "I am more in accord with the standard of orthodoxy in our denomination than they are. The standards were written in a more earnest age than this."

Having reached the corner where their roads separated, the two ministers parted very amicably.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUTY OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

On the following Tuesday afternoon, November 14, 1897, Mr. Robinson drove Mrs. Smith and her daughter and his cousin, Miss Juliet West, to Fairview, Mr. Jones' farm. Mr. Smith had been detained by unexpected business and Dr. Wesley sent word that he had to visit the sick. (As a matter of fact, the Rev. Dr. Wesley was enjoying an elegant dinner at General Sylvester's, who had been suffering from rheumatism for the last five years.)

Miss Juliet West was from Boston, and had stopped over in Browntown a few days on her way to spend the winter in Florida. She was about thirty-five years old, was very richly and expensively dressed, wore spectacles, and carried in her arms a very fat and wheezy lap-dog.

The party stepped from the surrey, the horse was hitched, and Miss West was introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Jones, who came out to welcome their guests. As they mounted the low porch, Miss Jenny turned to look at the view. She proposed, as the evening was so mild, that they all have seats on the porch. Miss West feared it would be chilly, and she was accommodated with a rocking-chair in the open door. As she glanced into the room and saw the plain furniture and the rag carpet, she evidently thought that her friends had brought her into an odd place, for she gathered her dainty skirts very closely about her.

It was a view worth studying. To the southwest a range of hills was separated from Fairview by a narrow valley. On the south the horizon was bordered by Bays Mountain, a range that stretches from the Virginia line half way to Chattanooga. In front of it lay Browntown. On the southwest were the Browntown heights, sprinkled with cottages. A little farther on was a bold knob called Crockett's Ridge, after David Crockett, the famous frontiersman of Tennessee and Texas. Another mountain filled most of the northern horizon, but fell towards the east and gave a glimpse of Clinch Mountain, twenty miles away.

"It is very pretty, indeed," said Miss West; "not so grand as the scenery about Asheville nor so wild and picturesque as the valley of the French Broad, which I saw last week; but for a residence, dear Mrs. Jones, I think I should prefer this locality to either."

Before she could reply Mr. Jones said abstractedly: "Yes, this is a beautiful world, beautiful everywhere. Every place, the seashore, the hills, the valleys, the piedmont region, the mountains, the prairies, has its own peculiar charm. If there were no legal oppression, if the Gospel could have a fair chance, earth would be heaven."

"I am exquisitely delighted, Mr. Jones, to have the opportunity of hearing your views," Miss West responded, "for I often heard my twin brother, Julian, who perished in the conflagration of his residence in the year 1887, converse about reform."

All asked about the fire, and Miss West explained: "He insisted on living in an old house alone with an odious man servant named Sawyers. It was quite odd, almost eccentric. The house was consumed on May 30,

1887, and he undoubtedly perished in the ruins. He frequently conversed about the anomalies of our civilization, which, in spite of all its apparent defects, is the consummation of the ages. On one occasion, indeed, at a dinner party at a Mr. Bartlett's, he was quite violent on the subject."

"Very well," Mr. Jones quietly remarked, "we will continue the discussion where we left off last week. The next principle is:

"*Principle 7.—The sole and only duty and end of civil government is to do justice, to secure to each and all the rights given them by God.*"

"Is not this a very narrow and contracted view to take of the functions and province of government?" Miss West was the objector. "The power of the social organization should be used to raise the material and moral welfare of the whole body of the sovereign people to the highest possible point, to secure the same degree of welfare to all."

"Nothing promotes the material and moral welfare of the people," Mr. Jones said, "more than religion."

"You are so delightfully old-fashioned," Miss West interjected.

Without noticing the remark, Mr. Jones continued: "In most other countries and in all previous ages it has been thought that the power of the social organization, the nation, the government, should be used to pay clergymen and build and repair churches. We have no religion established by law; for we have learned better. We know that religion prospers most when the state keeps its hands off, lets it entirely alone."

"Our experience in this respect certainly confirms the principle," Mrs. Smith said.

"Art also contributes to the welfare of the people; for innocent pleasure is a moral benefit," said Mr. Jones, continuing the argument. "Formerly it was thought that government should patronize the fine arts. But this opinion has been generally abandoned.

"Literature also increases the material and moral welfare of the people. Formerly most governments tried to elevate the people in this way by suppressing bad books and rewarding the authors of good books. Now the patronage of literature has been abandoned by all, and the censorship of the press is retained by only Turkey and Russia. Literature flourishes most when government lets it alone.

"Manufactures also advance the material and moral welfare of the people. Once every government thought it a duty to encourage them by a protective tariff. They flourish most in Great Britain, where there is free trade with all the world, and in the United States, where there is a free trade reaching from ocean to ocean and from the regions where winter reigns one-third of the year to those where frost is unknown."

"I believe in the principle of protection," the Republican lawyer said.

"But do you think that manufactures would flourish," the minister asked, "if every state and territory in the Union had a protective tariff?"

"No, I suppose not," the lawyer admitted.

"American manufactures prosper," Mr. Jones continued, "because there is free trade between such different sections among such a large population.

"These instances prove that there are great and

important interests in which the government can best promote the material and moral welfare of the people by not meddling with them."

"The preamble of our Constitution," Mr. Robinson said, "states that one end of our national government is to promote the general welfare."

"There are three answers to this argument," replied the parson. "One is that the best way for government to promote the general welfare is to do justice—simply and only justice. This it can do; it cannot safely do more.

"Another answer is that the object is utopian. Who is to decide what will promote the 'general welfare'? The phrase is broad; what human and limited understanding can grasp it? When the tariff is revised every manufacturer thinks his product should be protected and his raw material should be admitted free of duty. Every one thinks first of his own welfare; if he is prosperous he thinks the nation is doing well. It is impracticable. No man and no combination of men can work it.

"The third answer is an appeal from the preamble of the Constitution to the Declaration of Independence, which is, on this point at least, a higher authority. It declares that governments are instituted among men to secure to them the inalienable rights with which the Creator has endowed them. A plainer declaration that governments exist merely to do justice could not be framed."

"Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are the rights mentioned, I think," said Miss Juliet West. "The first duty of society is to safeguard the lives of its members. Therefore, it is the right of the citizen to be

guaranteed a subsistence. At least I have read something like that in my favorite author."

"The state owes every man a living—a very comfortable doctrine," laughed Jack.

"It finds its realization in the poorhouse," the parson replied, joining the laugh. "Go there, Jack, and you will be supported. The hatred of that institution is a sufficient answer to the idea that the duty of securing life involves the duty of supporting life. For this hatred and dread does not proceed from the hardships of a pauper's life, which are less than those of a sailor in the forecastle of a merchantman, or a soldier in a campaign, but from the feeling of independence implanted by the Creator in the breast of every true man."

"But this feeling of independence," Mrs. Smith remarked, "is not wounded by sympathy and love."

"Therefore the work of relieving the wants of the poor," the parson said, "could be better done, done more wisely and kindly, by the church, God's organ of mercy, than it ever has been or can be done by the state, God's organ of justice—better by the Gospel than by the law."

"What is meant by the phrase in the Declaration, 'to secure life'?" asked Miss Jenny.

"Protecting life from injustice, from unjust physical force, and from unjust economic or material conditions," the minister explained. "Doing justice is more than passing good laws. The duty of government is not done when it places twelve good men in the jury-box. Government is more than a jailor to imprison criminals, more than a court to decide civil disputes, more than a soldier to defend the land from enemies, more than a tax-gatherer to pay itself for its work. It is not, on the

other hand, a priest to preach religion, nor a critic to encourage literature, nor a manufacturer to make goods, nor a merchant to sell them. It is God's judge to do justice, not merely to prescribe it—in everything, in industry, commerce, agriculture—everywhere. Its duty is to defend life from all unjust assaults from every quarter, and not at all to sustain it."

"You must admit, Mr. Jones," Miss Juliet West said, "that our civilization does not secure liberty to the masses of the people. They are forced through want to buy their lives by the surrender of their liberties; they accept servitude to the possessing class and become serfs in order to receive the means of subsistence. Excuse me for mentioning them. Their lives are so inartistic, so lacking in culture and æsthetics, that I have no toleration for them."

"What is liberty, Miss West?" asked the parson.

"The right to live in personal independence of one's fellows, owing only those common social obligations resting on all alike," was the reply. "You must not give me credit for the definition; it impressed me when I was reading my favorite author, and I wrote it on the tablet of my recollection."

"Is that liberty a blessing?" again inquired the minister.

"Alas, it is not," Miss West sighed. "I am very rich and much envied; for I have poor Julian's fortune as well as my own. But I have no one to live for, no one for whom I am bound to work. My father died when we were young, and the shock of Julian's death killed dear mamma. I am the most unfortunate being alive."

"An obligation, therefore, to work for others—servi-

tude, if you wish the word—is necessary to our happiness," the minister said, after all had expressed their sympathy with Miss West by word or look. "Freedom from such bondage is no part of liberty. I should define liberty to be the privilege or right or legal opportunity of doing what we ought to do. A government that secured to all the kind of liberty mentioned by Miss West would be the worst tyrant."

At this moment the house-cat passed before the door and the lap-dog jumped from Miss West's lap and barked fiercely. His mistress caught him up and talked to him. "Oh, you poor, darling little wootsy-tootsy, did the horrid cat want to hurt you?" When he was quieted, Miss West repeated the attack: "You must admit, at least, that government does not secure to the people their other right—'the pursuit of happiness.' What sordid, paltry lives they do live. I have been told since coming to Browntown that many people in this neighborhood actually subsist largely at this season of the year on corn-bread and sorghum molasses. Phaugh, it's disgusting."

As the talk was becoming quite personal, to divert it Mrs. Jones asked Miss West what she called her dog.

"I call him Bellamy," she said, "after my favorite writer, dear, darling Edward Bellamy. For I am a great socialist. I have no patience with Bryan and the Populists. They are so prosaic and practical; they do actually seem to sympathize with the work-people, whom I cannot bear; they are really vulgar. But Edward Bellamy is so different; you can't imagine—so romantic and imaginative; his books are better than any novel."

CHAPTER IX.

SOCIALISM.

Mrs. Smith and her daughter and Mrs. Jones had never seen a socialist, and they gazed at Miss West with much curiosity and a little fear. At last Mrs. Smith ventured to ask her, "What is socialism?"

"Oh," she said, "it is the most sublime, nicest and sweetest thing you ever dreamed of. It gives to everybody—man, woman and child—a salary of four thousand dollars a year, and free rides, free gas, free electric lights, and most everything else. There will be no housekeeping to be done, for the United States will do the cooking and furnish new clothes and carpets whenever they are soiled, and do everything else that's nice. It's just grand. You don't have to go to church on Sundays, but listen to sermons by telephone; and the preacher don't talk about sin and repentance and other impolite topics, but about the nobility of human nature. They spread an awning over the street whenever it rains. Everybody lives in a palace. Nobody works under twenty-one or over forty-five, and between times they take a vacation whenever they please. It is magnificent, I tell you. And it's better for the women than for the men. They are to be stronger and more muscular than the men, and do the courting, and dress like men, and there won't be any standard of female propriety. And there won't be any sickness or stealing. And all are

college graduates. And everybody is to be happy and do just as they please all the time. It will take me a month to tell you all about it. Whenever I think of it the symphonies of all the celestial orbs thrill every vein in me."

Bellamy was much excited by the enthusiasm of his mistress, and began to bark first in her lap, and afterwards, jumping down, he ran around the room looking for something to bark at, but barking all the time till he was completely exhausted. Miss West at length grew anxious about him and asked Mrs. Jones for some milk for him, and the two ladies and Bellamy went for the needed refreshment.

"What in the world was that woman talking about?" Mrs. Smith asked. "Does anybody know?"

"She was describing the results which Mr. Bellamy—the writer, and not the dog," Mr. Jones explained—"thinks will flow from socialism."

"Can you tell us what socialism is?" Mr. Robinson asked.

"Its fundamental idea is that the state, the government, should own all the capital and do all the work, farming, manufacturing, etc.; in other words, that the main end of government is to make us all rich. It is opposed to our principle that the end of government is to do justice. While we are entertained by such dreams we will do very little or nothing to stop the injustice that is putting the wealth of the many into the pockets of the few and reducing the masses to penury."

"I thought that socialists were pickpockets or burglars or something of that kind," said Miss Jenny.

"You do them a great injustice," Mr. Jones replied. "Theirs is a beautiful dream. It will be realized in the

New Jerusalem. In that city will be perfect co-operation in the supply of the needs of all, whatever they may be. It will be a communistic city, too; for there will be no rich and no poor. It will be anarchistic also; for there will be no policemen in it. But neither Boston nor Browntown is the New Jerusalem; neither Tennessee nor Massachusetts is Eden. Meanwhile these dreams of socialism, communism and anarchism are doing great harm; for those who should be working for justice are building air-castles that have no foundation in anything that exists now. When justice is introduced it will be time enough to think of these airy mansions of the fancy. For love and fraternity can only rest on justice. But when we have justice, in my opinion, we shall need no other governmental action. Personal love and brotherhood, the Gospel, the church, will do all else that is needed to bring in the millennium."

Bellamy and the ladies now returned, and when they were seated Mr. Jones asked: "Miss West, why are you a socialist?"

"I grow so weary of my social duties," she answered, "and when I come home from a ball or a dinner all broken down it rests my soul to read a chapter from one of Mr. Bellamy's lovely works. I always keep them on the shelf with my prayer-book; but in Lent I read a little from the prayer-book first. Besides, you must not think me a perfect heathen or heartless. I see the misery about me, and charming Mr. Bellamy offers such an exquisite solution for all these troubles, and one that does not involve any work or money on my part; for indeed I have no time left when my social obligations are met. But surely, Mr. Jones, you are not so unæsthetic as to object to socialism. Let me convert you."

"I will listen with pleasure," was his response.

"What shall I use first?" mused the fair socialist. "The trusts? You see, Mr. Jones, how all kinds of business are consolidating. After awhile all business of every sort will be in one huge trust, and then the government will take that, and everybody will be happy."

"If trusts are the flower and socialism is the fruit," said Mr. Robinson, "and the fruit is like the flower, it must be horrible."

"Keep still, cousin Jack," Miss Juliet spoke, "and don't interfere with my evangelistic work."

"Trusts are a symptom of social disease, and not a sign of health," was the parson's reply. "Justice will cure the disease, and its symptoms will disappear."

"The post-office shows that we are traveling toward socialism," the evangelist said, "and that it is a good thing. Here is a large business transacted by the people, and well done, to the satisfaction of all. As the government carries the letters, just so it can carry the freight and the passengers, and raise the grain, fatten the cattle and manufacture the goods to load the freight cars, and do it well, to the advantage of all the people."

"The post-office," Mr. Jones responded, "is a natural monopoly; that is, it is a business which by its very nature is a monopoly. One company can carry all the letters. If we allow two to do it we double the expense without any advantage. It is different with other business. Two farmers can raise twice as much corn as one, two factories can weave twice as much cloth; but two post-office companies can carry no more letters than one can carry. When only one can engage in a business it seems just that it should be reserved to the whole people and not given to any individual person or corporation.

Nearly all the natural monopolies are carried on by the government in one country or another, and no other sort of business besides natural monopolies is conducted by any government. Some of these natural monopolies, like the streets, the roads, the administration of justice, the public defense by an army and navy, have been conducted by government for hundreds and thousands of years, without approaching any closer to socialism."

"The loss by competition——" began Miss West.

"Would be counterbalanced by the loss connected with consolidation," the parson ungallantly interjected. "The little farm is best tilled; the foot of the owner enriches the ground; and his eye prevents waste in the small factory and store. The economies of production are best practiced in small establishments. We have large ones now, not because goods can be better or more cheaply made in them, but because our unjust transportation and currency give them superior advantages. Besides, the small farms and factories have moral advantages over the large ones, in the independence, thrift, foresight, of their owners and hands. There is, indeed, Miss West, no comparison."

"But the cruelty of competition!" said the lady. "You will not defend that, I know. To make men compete for business, for a living, for a life! It is as barbarous as the gladiatorial shows in the Roman amphitheater, where men competed for life."

"Competition is the charm of nearly all the games which children and youth play," Mr. Jones replied. "Without it they would be dull. It is one charm of courting; the wooer has, or thinks he has, rivals. It adds zest to the more sedate amusements of adults. It

is the spur to diligence in our schools and colleges. The desire to excel has written our best books, composed the sweetest music, carved the finest statues, erected the handsomest buildings, invented our machinery, introduced improved methods into our agriculture and commerce. The proverb says truly that 'competition is the life of trade.' Without it life would be insipid. The inspired apostle uses the Grecian games to incite believers to greater earnestness in the Christian race. If, therefore, there is any cruelty in the competition of the present age, it must be because the rules of the game are unjust. Justice will repeal the unjust rules and alter the unjust conditions of our competitions."

The double millionairess was evidently unaccustomed to such a sturdy opposition, and she spoke with a rising color and in a stronger tone: "Socialism, co-operation, altruism is the very essence of the Gospel. That you, a minister of the Gospel, should object to it amazes me."

Mr. Jones was a little nettled by the personal reproach, but he replied calmly: "Thank you, madam, but the Gospel does not need nor ask the aid of the civil power to introduce or disseminate its essence throughout the world. All it wants, all the church asks of the state, is justice. Establish justice, and the church will disseminate love, mutual help, brotherly affection, throughout every class and every land.

"Besides, we have already an almost perfect co-operation. Our friend Mr. Smith brings to Browntown every year more shoes and dry goods than he and his family could use in a thousand years. Every one is helping in this mutual co-operation. Already all are working for each, and each for all. The agents of this co-operation are paid for their work, and they should be. Perhaps

some get more than their work deserves and others not enough; justice will remedy this evil. But socialism will destroy this co-operation and forbid the practical brotherhood that now exists. Its destruction will be a blow to religion and constitutional liberty, and will introduce irreligion and despotism. When men have to depend upon the government for food, for clothing, for houses, for everything they need, they will be its slaves; and when they stop working for each other and work only for the state, the very idea of human brotherhood will perish."

CHAPTER X.

"HEBREW, JUSTICE, JUSTICE!"

THE three boys now came in from the school at the foot of the hill, having raced from the mouth of the lane. They spoke to the company, and Bellamy barked at them. George made friends with him and sat down on the edge of the porch with Bellamy in his arms. Mr. Jones told Jake and Charley to get their Bibles.

"We have agreed, Miss West, to try all political questions by the Bible," Mr. Jones remarked.

"Indeed!" she replied. "How delightfully primitive that is! But does such a method accord with the intellectual culture and moral refinement of the twentieth century?"

"Cousin Juliet, we are all believers in the existence of God," Mr. Robinson began.

"Yes, indeed," his cousin answered. "Skepticism is in bad taste, I think, especially in a lady."

"And his will," the lawyer continued, "must be the highest law of politics and statesmanship. The clearest revelation of it is in the Bible."

"Certainly, all that is true," the Boston lady replied. "But is it exactly the thing to use the Bible in that way? Is it in good taste? To me it seems a species of profanity to associate the Bible with politics. It feels almost like sacrilege."

"If the Bible was given to us for our guidance," Mrs. Smith remarked, "we should be guided by it on week days as well as on Sundays, in civil affairs as well as in church matters."

"Proceed then, please," Miss West said. "This is a new sensation to me; and to one who has ennui as much as I have new experiences are charming."

"The first proof is the silence of the Scriptures," began the preacher. "It devotes hundreds of pages to the science of government, but nowhere except in the speech of the heathen orator Tertullus do I find any intimation that it is the duty of government to make the people rich or to do anything but justice. The idea is, in fact, heathenish and non-scriptural.

"My second proof is the name used by the Holy Spirit to describe civil rulers. They are called 'judges.' The duty, and the only duty, of judges, both in criminal and civil cases, is to do justice, to establish righteousness.

"Thirdly come the proof texts. They are almost innumerable. Perhaps six will not be too many for your patience. Jake, please read Leviticus 19:15."

He read:

"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor."

"Judge means govern," the minister explained, "and judgment government. Laws are not to be passed for the advantage of any class; not for the poor, as the Populists proposed in their sub-treasury scheme, nor for the rich, as has been the common custom of our national and state legislatures. The duty of governing right-

eously is the personal duty of every citizen; the personal pronoun 'thou' is used twice."

"What can you mean by calling it a personal duty?" Miss West asked.

"Every citizen is to use his or her time, influence and money to secure to all and to every one the rights with which the Creator has endowed them," was the explanation. "Charley, read Deuteronomy 16:18-20; and, Jake, II Samuel 23:3."

They read:

"Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just ["Hebrew, justice, justice," whispered Mr. Jones] shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

"Does not the last text go to show," said Mr. Robinson, "that God gives some directions about ruling? No one can rule in the fear of God unless he gives some commands about it."

"Many other passages are obscure if we deny that the Bible teaches sociology," the minister replied. "Jake, please read Psalm 82:3, and, Charley, Isaiah 1:16-17."

"Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy."

"Cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

"That's a socialist text," said Miss West, triumphantly. "We are told to 'relieve the oppressed'—what socialism proposes to do."

"The margin is, 'Righten the oppressed;' the true relief for the oppressed is righteousness or justice," the minister replied. "In general it is true that justice is the truest charity to the poor; and it is the only charity that the state government can give them without pauperizing them. I have one more proof text. Jake, please read Jeremiah 22: 3-4."

"Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgment and righteousness and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if you do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David."

"National independence and prosperity are the results of public justice," the minister commented. "It was not the Assyrians nor the Babylonians that destroyed the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, but public injustice. What overturned the throne of David can certainly overthrow the government established by Washington.

"My fourth proof is the character of Christ's reign on earth. If he will do only justice, although possessed of infinite riches, wisdom and power, we may be sure that merely human rulers should not try to do more."

"Are not the prophecies about his reign very obscure?" Mrs. Smith asked.

"They are," was the reply. "The time and manner

of their fulfillment are much disputed. But the descriptions of the nature of Christ's reign are very plain. We will listen to only three. Charley, read, please, Psalm 72:2."

"He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with judgment."

"In the succeeding verses of this psalm the effects of public justice are very beautifully and eloquently described," the preacher added. "Jake, read Isaiah 11:2, and, Charley, Jeremiah 23:5."

"With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth."

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

"If the Son of God, when he comes," said Miss Jenny, in a low and reverent tone, "will only try to do justice in civil affairs, no human ruler should try to do more."

"It seems to me," Mrs. Smith said, "that the conscience of the human race confirms the teachings of Scripture. Everywhere and always it has affirmed that government, the laws, should be just."

"The whole theory and practice of law is based on the assumption that the aim of legislation is justice," the lawyer added. "On any other hypothesis the whole science would be a perfect chaos and the trial of cases would be a farce. Blackstone arranges what he says about the common law under the heads of 'Rights' and 'Wrongs.'"

"Reason also confirms the truth," the minister added.

"Unless government does justice there will be general confusion and violence."

Charley asked a question: "Has government any money to give away?"

"No, it creates nothing," his father explained. "It has only the money it takes from the people. It can give to some only by taking from others, can enrich some only by robbing others, can give some more than justice only by giving others less than justice. History also confirms the principle. Whenever government has tried to do more than justice, to encourage the fine arts, to patronize literature, to protect manufactures or agriculture, to support religion, it has generally done more harm than good."

At this moment Bellamy saw Polly, the old and dignified parrot, slowly waddling toward him on the ground, and he burst from George's arms and ran howling to his mistress. After quieting him she said to Mr. Jones: "You cannot possibly form any conception of the entertainment and instruction that I have derived from your luminous conversation. You will extend to me your pardon if I cannot immediately embrace the superfluity of your philosophy. But indeed I think I have more reverence for the Bible. My veneration for the Holy Book is so great that I never read it except on the Sundays in Lent and on Good Friday."

Mr. Jones was overwhelmed with the compliment. His wife invited their guests to stay to tea, but Miss West pleaded an engagement, and they drove off just as the sun was setting on the northern side of Crockett's Ridge.

As the surrey entered the lane Miss West said to Mrs. Smith: "I owe you ten million thanks for the delicious

interview which has refreshed my sensibilities this heavenly afternoon. Considering their rank in life and the wretched hovel which they inhabit, the affability and intellectuality of Mr. and Mrs. Jones are really quite extremely extraordinary."

Jack Robinson, Esq., and Miss Jenny Smith, in the front seat, exchanged glances. Perhaps they were studying each other.

CHAPTER XI.

"LIKE PEOPLE, LIKE PRIEST."

THE next day, November 15, 1897, Mr. Jones drove to Browntown to buy some corn-meal and sorghum molasses. In Mr. Smith's store were General Sylvester, formerly a member of Congress from the Thirty-third District of Tennessee, and Bob Dodson, the carpenter. When the trading was done, the General said to Mr. Jones: "I have heard from my friends Mr. Smith and Dr. Wesley about your political or Biblical discussion. I have been interested all my life in political and Biblical questions; and if you have a little leisure I would be glad to gain any information you can give me."

Mr. Jones said he was at leisure, and Mr. Smith invited them to walk into his office and sent across the street for Mr. John Robinson. While they were waiting for him the General remarked: "What a fine man Dr. Wesley is! One thing I admire about him is that he never talks shop, never mentions sacred things except in a sacred place. He took dinner with me yesterday, and you never would have guessed that he was a clergyman except by his saying grace at the table. I believe in being friends with the clergy; it helps a public man."

As Mr. Robinson had few clients, he was able to leave his office and come in. When they were all seated, the General in the only chair, the merchant on the high stool at the desk, the preacher and the lawyer on soap

boxes turned on end, and the carpenter on the edge of the coal box, Mr. Jones asked General Sylvester whether there was any particular subject he wished to discuss. On his replying in the negative, Mr. Robinson suggested that the subject be continued where it was interrupted the day before, and Mr. Jones, after a moment's thought, announced:

"*Principle 8.—Governments derive their authority, and voters and officers their right to influence and control political action, from God.*"

"An admirable statement," the ex-Congressman said, "of a sound and orthodox theological doctrine, which does you credit, Brother Jones. It has been very useful, no doubt, in monarchial countries, in restraining arbitrary power, but it does not apply to our institutions. Ours is a government 'of the people, by the people, for the people.' "

"But, General," asked Bob Dodson, "if it is true and was useful once, why isn't it true and useful now?"

"It is true theoretically, Robert," said the General, in a paternal tone. "Some truths are very important in one age and comparatively useless in another."

"Would you give an example, General?" the carpenter asked again.

The statesman was silent, meditating. The laws of nature, he thought, can never be safely disregarded, nor the truths of ethics or religion; and he could not think of any truth of sociology that was useless. He said at last: "None occurs to me just now, Robert."

"What does the principle mean, anyhow, General?" again asked Bob Dodson.

"It means this, Robert," was the reply. "No one

has the right to take property away from its owner without his consent—that is, to levy taxes—except God, from whom all property rights flow, or man, upon whom God has conferred the authority to levy taxes. Likewise, no one has a right to deprive another of his liberty or take his life, except the agents of God who have received the power to do this from God."

"You repudiate, then, the social contract theory of government?" the young lawyer inquired.

"Certainly I do," was General Sylvester's answer. "The theory supposes that men existed previous to government; but government of some kind is coeval with society. It supposes that men could exist outside of society. The first baby that tried it would not live long enough to relate his experience. No man has any right to form such a contract, to give to others the control of his life, his liberty, or his property; it would be self-murder or self-robbery. The theory is repudiated by the Declaration of Independence, and is, I think, generally abandoned. It was invented to defend constitutional liberty, but it really might be used to destroy it; for according to it there is no power, no authority, above the people. If they contracted together to reward burglars and punish honest people, by this theory they would have the right to do it."

"What is the difference, General,' Bob Dodson asked, "between this theory and a government 'of the people, by the people, and for the people'?"

"I do not see much," the merchant said. "In both the people have the right to imprison the virtuous for doing right."

"Our government, Robert, is the best and freest the sun ever shone upon," General Sylvester replied.

"Then I suppose it needs no improvement," Bob Dodson remarked.

"Robert, if you had seen one hundredth part of the corruption that I have seen, in municipal affairs, in county matters, at the state and national capitals, you would never say that. The politicians, as a rule, are corrupt."

"Which are the best men, General, the politicians or the preachers?" the Rev. Jacob Jones asked.

"There is no comparison," was the General's reply. "The preachers like fine dinners and large salaries; but that is natural—all like good eating and good wages. The ministers are learned, know thoroughly the science of their calling, are earnest in it, are self-denying in performing its duties. In all these points they are in marked contrast to the politicians."

"Why is that?" the minister asked. "They are taken from the same families and have the same family training. They are educated in the same schools and colleges and are subject to the same social influences. Why are they so different?"

"Frankly, I don't know," the General replied.

"Perhaps the old Hebrew proverb Jack quoted the other night may throw some light upon it," Mr. Smith observed. "'Like people, like priest.' The priests are what the people want them to be, what the people make them. So we might say, 'Like voters, like politicians.' The politicians are corrupt because the voters are."

"The explanation has force," the minister said, "but it only throws the difficulty one step further back. Why do the people make their preachers so good and their politicians so bad? Why are our churches so pure

and our parties so corrupt? The same people govern both."

"Parson, you're hitting the nail on the head now," the carpenter said.

After exchanging glances, the politician remarked, "We must admit we don't know."

"Why don't the preachers talk like the stump orators?" the minister inquired. "Why don't the Baptists exhort the people to be immersed to bring in good times? Why don't the Presbyterians hire brass bands and get up torch-light processions to prove to the people that they should have their babies baptized and believe in the doctrine of election? Why don't the Methodists wave the bloody shirt and twist the tail of the British lion to bring sinners to the anxious seat? Why don't the Episcopalians raise a large sum of money and lay big wagers that they will have more new members next year than the Congregationalists? Why don't the Lutherans bribe men to join their church?"

"If any preacher did any of those things he would be sent to the lunatic asylum," Mr. Smith said.

"He would be very wicked, indeed, as well as insane," General Sylvester added.

"Do we not," the preacher asked, "hear arguments and see acts just as silly and immoral in every presidential election?"

"I do not understand the question," said General Sylvester.

"You're driving the nail home," exclaimed Bob Dodson, "and you'll clinch it directly."

"The Republicans argue that because the Southerners rebelled, therefore there should be a protective tariff," the preacher explained. "The Democrats say that

because the whites were excluded from the polls after the war, therefore the tariff should be revised. The Republicans oppose the free coinage of silver because it would reduce the purchasing power of wages, and the Democrats favor it because it will raise prices and bring better times. Brass bands and bribes are used to prove that free coinage is right and that it is wrong. If a preacher should use similar methods you would say that he was crazy or profane. What makes the difference?"

After a pause the lawyer said: "You will have to tell us, Parson."

"It is because the people think that God is the head of the church, and they do not regard God as the head of the nation," the minister explained. "Therefore whoever uses a lying argument or an unworthy expedient for the church they think commits a sin against God, and they look upon him as either insane or blasphemous. But as they do not think that God is the head of the state they tolerate, and even applaud as smart, the sophistical logic and the corrupt methods of political leaders."

"And does this explain the difference between the preachers and politicians?" Bob Dodson asked.

"Certainly," was the reply. "The clergy look upon the ministry as the service of God. Therefore they prepare themselves for it and perform its duties in the fear of God. When the politicians regard their work as a ministry of God, they will be as pure and as consecrated as the preachers."

"How can they take such a view of it?" the ex-Congressman asked very quietly.

"It is a holier thing to make and execute the laws than to preach the Gospel," the minister replied.

"Civil officers interpret God's justice to men. They are God's judges to declare what is right and wrong. They are armed with God's power, the power to take away life and liberty and property, in order to enforce their decrees. The clergy are merely messengers to offer mercy. To use an illustration from the old Jewish tabernacle, the civil magistrates stand in the holy of holies to interpret the law within the ark; but the preachers are merely Levites standing at the door of the outer court to sing psalms without."

"Certainly not," General Sylvester said. "It is the very essence of a church that it is of God and has a message from him to deliver."

"Remember now," continued the parson, "that it is the essence of civil government to do justice, and that the standard of justice is God's will; that God is the head of the state in a higher sense than of the church, because he has given to the state powers which he has denied to the church. What shall we say, then, of a democracy that claims to be 'of the people, by the people, and for the people'?"

"You must not be too hard on the General, Parson," said Bob Dodson.

"He can't be, Robert," replied the politician. "But how would you put it?"

The preacher replied: "I don't want to be hard on any one, for I have entertained these erroneous notions myself, and if I judged others I would condemn myself. I would say that government is 'of God, by the people, and for God.' "

"That would be a theocracy," the General answered.

"Better a theocracy than a demonocracy or a plutocracy," said Bob Dodson.

"No more than the churches," the parson responded. "They are founded on the authority of God and exist for his glory, but they are governed by the people. No, it would be a true democracy, the government of a people who fear God and know that his glory is the virtue and happiness of the people."

The General rose to go, saying: "You have given me much to think about."

"That is my aim, to make people think," the minister replied. "But stay just a little longer, for it is my custom to try everything by the Bible."

"That is hardly necessary," the ex-Congressman said. "The fact that no government can exist for a day without exercising powers that can only come from God shows where government gets its authority."

"The Declaration of Independence," Bob Dodson added, "seems to assert the principle when it says that 'governments are instituted,' not by men, but 'among men.' "

"Most states outside of our country that have written constitutions admit the principle in their preambles," the lawyer stated.

"Are not the inscriptions on the coins of Christian monarchies an acknowledgment of it?" the merchant asked.

Meanwhile the minister had inquired for the Bible; there was none, and Mr. Smith offered to send out and borrow one. But the minister said that he would give the proofs from memory.

"The first proof is in the words of Christ to Pilate: 'Thou couldst have no power over me at all except it were given thee from above.' The argument is from the greater to the less. If such a bad governor as

Pilate had authority from God, much more have good rulers."

"But could Pilate be called a minister of God?" Mr. Smith asked.

"I believe so. He was much better than none," Bob Dodson answered.

"The second proof is in Romans, thirteenth chapter," continued the parson. "You all remember the passage: 'The powers that be are ordained of God.' The subject is discussed for half the chapter.

"The third proof is the fact that God appointed Moses, Samuel, Saul, David and others to be civil rulers."

At this instant the dinner bell at the hotel rang, and the party broke up, the General thanking the minister very politely. Mr. Robinson told Mr. Jones as they walked to the door that his cousin, Miss Juliet, wished to see him again before she left for Florida, and they agreed to call on her the next day.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PEOPLE ARE THE JUDGES.

On Thursday afternoon, November 16, 1897, the Rev. Jacob Jones and John Robinson, Esq., went to call upon Miss Juliet West at the Centre-of-the-World Hotel. They were ushered into her reception parlor, which was a bedroom from which the bedstead had been removed, and were cordially received by Miss West. She apologized for the appearance of the room, saying: "This was the best suite of apartments that could be obtained at this barbarian caravansary. I am profoundly delighted by your lucubrious conversational abilities, Mr. Jones, and I hope that you will continue the process of my enlightenment."

Mr. Jones said he was glad to entertain her and announced his ninth maxim as follows:

"*Principle 9.—The people are the judges appointed by God to decide what is right and what is wrong in political affairs.* Vox populi, vox Dei."

"The Latin does not mean that the people are as good, as wise or as infallible as God, but that the people are the supreme judge appointed by God to decide between right and wrong in political matters. It is the right of the people to rule."

"That is just splendid," said Miss Juliet. "I am such a strong believer in the rights of the people—that is, of the better and wealthier class. As for the vulgar

horde, they have, like the irrational creation, no thoughts above their coarse provender."

"You know my method," began Mr. Jones.

"And your elaborations are so delightsomely peculiar," added Miss West.

"My first proof of the principle," Mr. Jones continued, "is the case of Moses. He was probably the heir of the Egyptian throne, learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, cultured and refined."

"A most admirable character," Miss West interjected.

"But his sympathies were with the Hebrew bond-servants. He thought, and thought rightly, as the events showed, that he was the one to deliver them from their oppression. It never occurred to him, as he had been educated in a royal palace, that the consent of the people was needful before he could righteously be their leader and redeemer. He tried to deliver them, but they met him with the question: 'Who made thee a prince and a ruler over us?' "

"The vulgar wretches," muttered Miss Juliet.

"Having alienated both the Egyptians and the Hebrews, he had to flee. In his forty years' retirement his views changed; and when the Lord wished to send him to deliver the Hebrews his chief objection was that they would not accept him as their ruler."

"Surely," the lawyer spoke, "if God himself appointed him to do the work, the consent of the people was not necessary."

"The first thing that God commanded him to do for the deliverance of Israel," the preacher said, "was to gather the elders of the people together and obtain their consent to his leadership.

"In the most impressive way possible, by his own

example, the Lord has taught us that the consent and approval of the people are necessary to any public action, however wise and good it may be in itself. There could be nothing better for Israel than its deliverance from bondage; and Moses was the man best qualified to do it, both by his life in Egypt and his life in the desert. But it was to be done, he was to do it, only by the approval of the people expressed through their elders.

"My second instance is the establishment of the monarchy in the time of Samuel. The people grew tired of the republican rule described in the book of Judges, in which the men best able to repel their numerous foes were made their rulers or judges."

The lawyer asked: "Was Israel a republic?"

"The history is very much condensed," the minister answered; "several hundred years in about twenty-five pages of our English Bible; but the account of the beginning of Jephthah's administration makes it plain. The people wanted a king—not a constitutional monarchy, but an oriental despotism. The pretext was trifling—the corruption of some deputies who could have been removed. The change was radical—a revolution in the constitution of the nation. It was the height of folly."

"Could not Samuel prevent the people from carrying out their folly?" Miss West said. "If he could not, he was not as smart as some of our statesmen. The people rage against trusts; but, thanks to our public men, they cannot interfere with business. He should have done it if he could. I am a member of the Daughters of the Revolution and Colonial Dames and am opposed to monarchies."

"I suppose that he was the equal in political ability of any man now living," the preacher responded. "His

long and successful administration proves it. He had the supreme authority; and he had the support, we may infer from the history, of the better men of the nation, and also of the worst. So that there is little doubt that he could have defeated the wish of the great majority of the nation, or at least delayed its execution."

"Why, then, did he not prevent it?" Miss West asked again. "I cannot understand his conduct. It is the duty of the more intelligent and propertied classes to restrain the follies of the people, such as the free silver craze and Bryanism. It seems to me that he failed in his duty to his country. Why did he permit it?"

"Because God himself said to him, 'Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee.' "

"Indeed, must the people be obeyed when they are set upon acting foolishly? Of what use, then, are the leisure classes, the politicians, the courts, if they are not to restrain and control the people? You surely are jesting."

"I am serious, Miss West," the preacher answered. "The people, that is, the large majority of them, wanted what was bad for them, what at length made them captives in Assyria and Babylon, and the Lord commanded his prophet not to prevent their having it and also ordered him to assist the people in accomplishing their purpose."

"Had the people no written constitution?" Miss West asked in surprise. "Why did not the courts exercise their power and declare their new law unconstitutional?"

"The law of Moses was their civil constitution. It is certainly opposed to monarchy. Samuel knew it and told the people so. He was the supreme judge of the nation. But God forbade him to use his judicial power to defeat the wishes of the people."

"It is very strange," Miss West exclaimed. "I can not understand it."

"It means," explained Mr. Jones, "that the will of the majority of the people should be the supreme law of the nation. Whatever prevents or delays the doing of what they wish done in public affairs is wrong, is rebellion against God."

"It would follow," said the lawyer thoughtfully, "that written constitutions, and the powers claimed by our courts of declaring unconstitutional laws regularly passed by the representatives of the people, and making them null and void, are opposed to the teaching of the Bible. The power claimed and exercised by our courts of sitting in judgment on laws regularly passed and making them null and void has only one precedent in the history of the world, and that was soon abolished as an intolerable oppression."

"If constitutions defeat the will of the people," the minister said, "they are condemned by the example of God when monarchy was established. He would not suffer even the law of Moses to stand in their way. But the text approves that regard for law and established order and for written constitutions which is the foundation and the fence of our Anglo-Saxon liberties and of all constitutional liberty throughout the world; for law, established order, constitutions, institutions, the common law are the voice of the people. But when the voice claims to be mightier than the people and assumes to suppress the people's will, it is a vile usurpation.

"We have an illustration in our own history," the minister continued, "of the wickedness and folly of this abuse of written constitutions. The people of 1789, who adopted the Federal Constitution, forbade the nation

of 1830-1861 to meddle with slavery in any peaceable manner, and the latter submitted to this unreasonable and unscriptural usurpation. Every other nation (except some African and Asiatic states) abolished slavery without war; but we could only wash it away in blood. Our civil war, therefore, enforces the teaching of Scripture."

"Suppose that the will of the people is opposed to the will of God?" Miss West asked.

"Then we must obey God rather than man," the minister responded. "But there must be no doubt, no possibility of reconciling the two, before we are justified in disobeying the human law. Such cases can rarely occur."

"Are there any other Biblical proofs of the principle?" the lawyer asked.

"Several," was the reply. "Moses, although specially inspired of God, only appointed those to be rulers in Israel who were made such by the people. The election of Jephthah is another illustration of the principle. Saul, although anointed king by God's command, would not exercise the royal authority till accepted by the people. The same was true of David and Jeroboam. Lastly, we have the example of Christ himself. Although he was the Son of God, he would not compel the man who had taken his brother's inheritance to restore it, because he had not been made a judge. He refused to decide the question whether the Jews should submit to the Roman emperor, because the decision of that question belonged to the people."

"If the Bible," Miss West objected, "makes the will of the people the supreme law of the nation, why can you not quote an express command?"

"The Holy Spirit," the Bible student answered, "proceeded in this matter as he did in the marriage question. There are only a few obscure intimations in the Scriptures that God prefers monogamy, but they have been sufficient to establish it in all Christian countries. Just so the references to the right of the people to rule, whether their will is wise or foolish, are sufficient to establish the principle. An express command might have caused much bloodshed and might not have hastened the establishment of true democracy."

"The principle is certainly reasonable," the lawyer said. "Only those laws which are founded on popular approval are well executed and beneficial. A law that is generally condemned is apt to be a dead letter; or, if it is enforced, it often does more harm than good."

"We need a strong government to protect the rights of property," the millionairess protested.

"And when the government and laws conform most closely to the will of the people they are strongest," the parson continued. "Our trouble is that we really do not have a democratic government. Our courts, our governors, our parties, our politicians, our cliques, think it right to defeat the will of the people, to bamboozle the people, to thwart their wishes, by judicial decisions, by political trickery, in every way. More democracy will cure many of our evils. Lynch law is an illustration. If the administration of justice followed the wishes of the people, instead of the will of the legal profession, it would instantly disappear.

"The Bible principle commands us to adopt all the methods that will give the will of the people more influence over government. Among the methods recommended for this purpose are the Australian ballot,

woman suffrage, the referendum, the initiative, the imperative mandate, proportional representation, the corrupt practices act, which regulates the amount and manner of spending money on elections, and the decision of contested elections by impartial judges. All of these except one have been tried in one country or another and have generally worked well. The Bible principle forbids all methods which tend to defeat the will of the people."

"You seem to defend mobocracy," said Miss West.

"To apply a term of reproach to a principle approved by God is not very reverent," the minister remarked. "We may put the matter thus: If the end of government is to benefit the people, then no one should rule, for no one can do more than guess what measures will benefit them. But if the end of government is to do justice, the majority should rule; for all have consciences to see justice, and the majority are less likely to make a mistake. If government should conform to the higher law, the majority should rule, for all have alike and equally the data of ethics."

"And you think it wrong," Miss West asked, sarcastically, "for the politicians to adopt spread-eagle platforms and make spread-eagle speeches in order to protect the rights of property?"

"If the people are God's agents, God's judges, to decide what his law requires," the minister replied, "whoever lies to them in platforms or pledges which are not meant to be carried into effect lies to God."

"It is also wrong, I suppose,"—Miss West spoke still more sarcastically,—"to influence the odious laboring classes when the interests of property are at stake?"

"It is the duty of every man and woman to assist

others to reach a right decision of political questions," Mr. Jones replied. "But the intimidation of voters, and the bribery of voters, by whomsoever done or for whatever purpose, are great crimes against God."

"Such atrocious sentiments!" Miss West exclaimed. "I don't believe that you are a clergyman at all. You are an impostor, a communist, an anarchist, a dynamiter. Have you a bomb in your pocket? Don't fire it at me, please; I have never harmed you. Come, Bellamy; fly, Bellamy, to the protection of your mistress."

The lap-dog, who had been asleep in the next room, heard the loud appeal, and there was a scratching and barking at one door and a knocking at the other. Miss West's maid and dog entered at one door and Miss Jenny Smith at the other. Bellamy ran round the room, barking furiously, and at last leaped into his mistress' lap and licked her face, while Miss Jenny rubbed her wrists. Miss West put her hand over her breast, exclaiming: "Oh, my poor heart! I am dead, entirely dead. Cousin Jack, do not sepulchre me in this savage territory, where even the ministers carry bombs to assassinate those who differ from them. Entomb me near the luxurious cenotaphic monument which I erected in memory of our dear Julian in glorious Mount Auburn Cemetery."

Her maid explained that she was subject to such hysterical attacks, and that the only remedy was to put her to bed. The company therefore retired.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE IDEAL WOMAN.

THE afternoon was fine. As they descended the steps of the Center-of-the-World Hotel, Mr. Robinson asked Miss Smith to take a walk, and she agreed. Mr. Jones looked at them as they started toward the Browntown Heights.

Miss Jenny Smith was about five feet two inches high, well proportioned and graceful in all her movements. Her hair was a light brown and her eyes matched it. Her face no photograph could do justice to, for its charm lay in its ever-changing vivacity, which the sun could not print upon paper.

John Robinson, Esq., was six feet two in height, had black hair, rather coarse, and a spare frame. He was very dignified in manner, and had large features.

Miss Jenny asked what had disturbed Miss West.

"It was the parson's defense of the right of the people to rule," Jack Robinson replied, "and his denunciation of the bribery and intimidation of voters as sins against God."

"What did he say about woman suffrage?" she inquired.

"He rather favored it," was the reply. "His text was God's command to civil government: 'Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee.'"

"How does that apply?" she asked.

"The opponents of woman suffrage must take one of four positions," he answered. "They must either assert that women are not people; or that there is some better way of hearkening to their voice in political matters than through the ballot; or that they have and can have no voice or opinion about public questions; or, lastly, they can refuse to obey God's command. The first position no one can take, for women are undoubtedly people, human beings, having conscience and reason. The second position no sensible person can occupy. If women are to exert any influence over political questions, it should be done openly. Clandestine, secret and underhand methods are the curse of our politics. For example, the sugar trust. Publicly it professes no more interest in politics than most women, but secretly it controls both political parties and levies its taxes upon every family."

"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world," she quoted, laughing.

"If that were true," he answered, "it would not be obedience to God's command. It requires the government to listen to the people and not to their children. But it is not true. The boys, when they vote, do not remember their mothers' instructions. They think that voting is something that women know nothing about."

"If women are to be hearkened to in public matters," she remarked, "they should be responsible for what they say. Irresponsible power is tyranny."

"Another good reason why no sensible man can suppose that there is any better way of hearkening to the voice of woman than through the ballot," Jack rejoined. "There are two other positions which the opponents of

woman suffrage can hold. They can refuse to obey God."

"They should be frank about it and admit their disobedience," Miss Jenny remarked.

"But they are not," was his reply. "They base their disobedience on their reverence for God's word. Hypocrisy is a hard word and I do not like to use it. But the ministers quote the text, 'I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man,' as forbidding woman suffrage, and on the very next Sunday perhaps they will hold a congregational meeting and invite and entreat the women to vote."

"I think it's harder to stand up in church," she said, "than it would be to put a vote into the ballot-box."

"Their conduct shows," he continued, "that in their opinion Paul's injunctions about woman's keeping silent in the churches, whatever they may mean, have no connection with voting."

"If the women kept silent," she interjected, "the Sabbath schools would lose more than half their scholars, and three-fourths of their teachers, and very many churches would have no singing."

"Voters are not teachers, but judges, to decide what God's law requires to be done," continued the lawyer. "Voting is judging, not teaching. If women can judge what is right and just, they should vote. God appointed them to be judges when he gave them conscience and reason, and when he said, 'Hearken unto the voice of the people.' "

They had been walking briskly and had reached the crest of the hill, and they looked over the city, two miles long, for a little while. As they turned to go homeward, Mr. Robinson resumed the subject.

"There is one other position that the enemies of woman suffrage can take—that women have no voice, no sentiments, no opinions to utter upon public questions."

"That is true of most, I fear," Miss Jenny replied. "How should they, when the state forbids them to utter any in the only way that can affect the making and execution of laws?"

"The parson's text requires the government to listen to the women who do have opinions about public matters," the lawyer said. "It is a great loss to the public that all do not. If public prosperity lies in conformity to righteousness, to the principles of public justice which God has ordained, we can ill spare woman's clearer insight into moral questions and her keener conscience."

"That very fact, if it be one," the member of the W. C. T. U. answered, "is made an argument against woman suffrage. They say that voting would destroy woman's modesty and purity."

"Why should it?" he asked. "I have noticed that places frequented by women, passenger cars, restaurants, stores, lawyers' offices, printing-offices, are cleaner than those occupied only by men. Why should it be different with political assemblages and voting-booths?"

"But I think that you do us more than justice," the woman replied. "We are very much like our brothers and fathers and husbands, and we share most of their views."

"You do not entirely coincide with them," the man argued. "There is a womanly point of view, and it must have its use, otherwise God would not have made man and woman unlike mentally. The women constitute more than half the adult population, and as long as

we refuse to listen to them we disobey the order, 'Hearken unto the voice of the people.' "

"But some say that women have not sense enough to vote," Miss Jenny objected.

"Excuse me, Miss Jenny," the lawyer replied; "the command was not to hearken to people of sense, but to obey those who had no sense, who were making a very unwise choice. A child of ten could have chosen better after hearing Saul's comparison between the two forms of government than the people did. But God ordered that they be obeyed. Moreover, if the object of voting is to make our nation rich, no one has sense enough to vote; for no one, except God, knows what laws or what officers will secure that end. But if the end of voting is to obtain just laws and righteous officers, I must adhere to my opinion that women are as well qualified to vote as men. Their minds, though somewhat different, are by nature as good as those of men. The girls go to school, as a rule, longer than the boys. The women have more leisure than the men, and read more and better papers and books. The men have the intelligence that comes from attending court and serving on juries and hearing political speeches, which the women lack; but the women derive more benefit from the services of the church than the men. And if they lack the development that business gives, they are also free from its evil influences. But all this is aside from the question. God ordains not aristocracy or the government of the best, but democracy, the government of the people."

After a pause Miss Jenny remarked: "Women's duties are not settled by the laws of Tennessee, but by the law of God."

"What a ridiculous thing it is," her companion said,

"to see a mother stinting herself and her family in the matter of sugar, scolding her children for asking for another spoonful on their mush or porridge, and yet not knowing or caring to know why sugar costs so much more here than in England."

"Is it more absurd or more pitiful?" the woman asked.

"Or a wife," the man continued, trying to make every dollar do the work of two, oppressing, beating down every woman she hires and every one she deals with, and yet never asking what makes her husband's wages or salary so small. It is silly."

"It is sinful," the woman said as they turned into the street on which she lived. "You are too charitable to my sex. The conduct you describe is wicked, especially in a Christian woman who believes that God governs the world and that his book reveals the principles of his government. Mercy is the beauty of womanhood. The woman who thinks only of her family and kindred, her friends and neighbors, who cares nothing about the misery there is in the world, not even enough to investigate its causes, whose thoughts are bounded by her house or her village—such a woman is a slander upon her sex, and, if she is a professor of religion, upon Christ who redeemed her. The true woman," she continued, her eyes lighting, "has mercy for her dress. Pity for the poor adorns her brow—not a pity that deals only in crusts of bread and flannels, but a pity that also thinks and prays and studies God's word and speaks to men and women. Instead of talking gossip or about the imaginary woes of the heroes and heroines of fiction, she knows and feels the real miseries of the world and the causes that produce them. She loves what Jesus loved, and

hates the injustice which is an abomination to Christ. God pronounced her benediction when he said through David: 'Blessed is he that considereth the poor'—that meditates upon the causes of their want."

"Yes," said Jack Robinson, "that is my ideal woman. And she has, Jenny, your hair, your height and your face."

He reached out to grasp her hand. But he did not get it, for Susie and Bobby Smith, who had seen them coming and had run to meet them, each seized one of her hands. He could not even see her face, for she bent over the children to kiss them and to arrange Susie's hat, which had fallen back over her shoulders. Her blush at the gate as she bade him good-by told him nothing, and as he went back to his office he was not feeling very kindly toward children.

CHAPTER XIV.

TAXING HONESTY—NATIONAL DEBTS.

THE next day, Saturday, the Rev. Jacob Jones walked into Browntown to get his mail. On Main Street Capt. Bill Johnson, the tax assessor, met him. and asked him to fill out a tax blank. "By doing so," he said, "you will save me the labor of going out to your place."

Mr. Jones expressed his willingness to save trouble, and proposed that they should step into Mr. Smith's office. On their way through the store they spoke to Mr. Smith, who was waiting on some ladies. He told them to use his office and added: "Brother Jones, you will find a Bible there if you need one. I was ashamed that there was none there the other day; for I try to run my store on Bible principles."

Bob Dodson sat in the chair in the office, by the fire, and Capt. Johnson sat on a box. Mr. Jones took the stool by the desk to fill out the blank. He read to himself the oath at its foot:

"I, ———, do hereby solemnly swear that the above schedules contain a full and true statement and description of all the property I or my wife or minor children own, or have an interest in, or which I control, regardless of exemptions, and that I have truthfully answered all questions, so help me God."

"This is an oath," he said, looking up, "and it seems to be a very full and explicit one, Capt. Johnson."

"Yes, indeed," said the assessor, spitting into the fire.

"The first item in the schedule, I see, is accounts," said the parson. "Andy Moore owes me a dollar for marrying him last week. He'll never pay, but it is an account. I have in my hands several hundred accounts due from subscribers of a suspended paper. The last time I dunned them I did not receive enough to pay postage; but they are accounts. The Washingtonville church has owed me a hundred and fifty dollars on salary for ten years. It will take several days' hard work to fill up this first blank, Capt. Johnson."

"If those are all," said the assessor, "put down a zero."

"But I am to swear that it is a 'full statement.' My wife's accounts. She sells chickens and butter sometimes, and I do not know her accounts."

"Put a zero there too."

"Jake has an old muzzle-loading shot-gun which he is always swapping. Sometimes he gets boot and gives credit."

"A zero there too."

"But I am to swear that this is a full statement. Here is another item: 'Steamboats.' Everybody knows, Captain, that I have no steamboat. I have had to haul water for several weeks, and how could I run a steamboat?"

"Put an aught there, too."

"But I read that 'An oath for confirmation is to men an end of all strife.' To swear to a fact that is not disputed, concerning which there is no doubt, looks to

me like taking God's name in vain—a violation of the third commandment."

"If you won't sign the blank I shall have to estimate your personalty, parson," said the assessor.

"And if you estimate it too high, put me to the trouble of having it reduced," said the minister. "Doesn't it seem to you a mean business, putting people to trouble unless they will take frivolous oaths?"

"If you mean that for a personal reflection——" Capt. Johnson began.

"I do not," the minister interrupted him. "I speak in sorrow. False swearing is one of our national sins."

"It is the law," he replied. "Our assessment blanks don't differ much from those of other states."

"Is the law right?" the other asked. "Does it accord with the third commandment—with God's law? Does it accomplish the end sought? There are men who notoriously own fifty or a hundred thousand dollars' worth of property. When you give them a blank they admit owning perhaps five thousand dollars. You can't do anything with them. Every member of the grand jury has taken your frivolous and idle oath, and you wouldn't get an indictment. If you did, the judge, the prosecuting attorney and the petit jury have carelessly signed such blanks, and there would be no conviction."

"That's true," the assessor admitted. "I never heard or read of any one's being punished for making a false return. But some have such a regard for an oath that they will make true returns."

"The tax on personalty, then, if I understand you, is a tax on honesty, veracity and the fear of God," the minister said. "Is such a tax right?"

The assessor slowly replied: "No, I think not."

"And the laws of Tennessee and other states are always laboring to diminish the regard of the people for an oath," Mr. Jones continued, "by requiring them to take unnecessary and frivolous oaths. Is that right?"

"No, it is not," Capt. Johnson answered more promptly.

"Every year, if the tax assessors reach all, twelve million adults carelessly take an oath, take God's name in vain, do it uselessly," the minister said. "Is it any wonder that times are so hard?"

Bob Dodson, the carpenter, who had been listening, roused himself to ask: "Would you tell us what the Bible says about taxes?"

"I don't believe it says anything," Capt. Johnson said. "The Bible is meant to tell us how to get to heaven."

"A mistake. The Bible says very little about heaven," the minister explained. "It tells us chiefly how to live on earth. Of course it speaks about paying taxes."

"Go ahead," Capt. Johnson said. "If it says anything about taxation I should like to hear it."

Mr. Jones replied by stating—

"*Principle 10.—The Bible commands all to pay taxes, to assist in defraying the necessary expenses of civil government.*"

"I wish you'd preach that doctrine," said the assessor. "It would help me very much."

"Yes, they should pay them cheerfully and conscientiously, as to the Lord, for civil rulers are God's ministers. If I were to preach a sermon about it, as

Capt. Johnson suggests, it would have four heads, as follows:

"1. Christ's example He refused to work a miracle to support his life, but he worked one to pay his taxes.

"2. Christ's command: 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' He places our political duties, and especially paying taxes, on a level with our duties to God.

"3. Paul's exhortation. Here it is," he said, opening Mr. Smith's new Bible. "Romans 13: 6-7: 'Pay ye tribute also: for they [magistrates] are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render, therefore, to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.'

"4. The analogy of the church. The passage is: I Corinthians, 9: 1-12. If God's ecclesiastical servants should be supported by the people, so also should his political servants be."

"If that's Bible doctrine," Bob Dodson said, "it is very odd that the churches should be willing to have their property untaxed."

"But they are doing a good work," Capt. Johnson objected, "a useful work to the state."

"So is every man who is raising his children honestly," the carpenter rejoined.

"It is queer that the churches in this matter should reject the example and precept of Christ." The minister continued: "The principle also requires that the necessary and proper expenses of the political parties be paid by the people in an open and honorable manner."

"Why?" Mr. Dodson asked.

"Because political parties are an essential part of our

governmental machinery; and the texts that prove that other political expenses should be paid by the people prove that these also should be. Now they are collected from those who desire favors from the government, from protected interests, from trusts and monopolies, from candidates for office and office-holders."

"What are the objections to their paying these political expenses, if they wish to?" asked Mr. Smith, who had entered the office.

"They may be arranged under four heads," Mr. Jones answered. "First, the parties incur obligations to the trusts, owners of natural monopolies, office-seekers, etc. Secondly, the money which is secretly and corruptly obtained is corruptly and secretly spent. Thirdly, the necessity of obtaining money by corrupt means for their parties corrupts the party leaders. And, fourthly, those who collect the money have the power of the purse and become the party 'bosses.' "

"The sugar trust, I guess," said Bob Dodson, "bribes both parties, for, whichever is in power, it is on top."

"If the people paid the expenses of the parties, as they do those of the churches, by free-will gifts," Mr. Jones added, "it would help to purify politics."

"Give us another principle," said the merchant.

"Very well. My eleventh maxim is:

"*Principle 11.—National debts are forbidden by God.*"

"There is not a word in the Bible about national debts," the merchant said. "They were unknown in Bible ages. They are comparatively a modern invention."

"If they were a reasonable and righteous way of

paying national expenses, is it likely that the old nations would have known nothing about them?" Bob Dodson demanded.

"There is nothing in the Bible forbidding counterfeiting or forgery. Does the Bible permit them? It is a book of moral principles, and not of legal rules. In forbidding it commands, and in commanding forbids. By enjoining one act it prohibits the contrary. The ten commandments are examples. The first, by forbidding us to reverence false gods, requires us to reverence the true God. By prohibiting idolatrous worship, the second enjoins spiritual worship. The third, by forbidding profanity, commands reverence. The fourth, by ordering the sanctification of the Sabbath, forbids Sabbath-breaking. The fifth forbids disobedience to parents by commanding honor."

"Enough," said Mr. Smith. "All must admit that rule of interpretation."

"By commanding the support of government by taxation," the parson continued, "the Bible forbids its support by borrowing. The two are contrary to each other, and if one is commanded, the other is forbidden."

But how can nations carry on war if they can't borrow money?" Capt. Johnson asked.

"As they draft men to fight, so they can take the money to support them," the parson replied. "A man's money is not so important to him as his life. If the cause of war justifies the taking of one, it justifies the other."

"War is very expensive now," said Bob Dodson. "I fancy that there would be little more of it if its cost could not be cast upon posterity."

"You don't favor repudiation?" asked Capt. Johnson.

"The Bible condemns it," the minister replied. "Israel made unwise and foolish promises to Gibeon, but God commanded that they be kept. The passages," he said, referring to Mr. Smith's new Bible, "are Joshua, ninth chapter, and second Samuel, twenty-first chapter. So national debts, which are merely promises to take money from some citizens to give it to others, were unwise, but they must be kept.

"Moreover, national debts are so mixed up with interest or usury that, if this is forbidden, national debts are forbiddden also.

"To accept this principle we need more faith in God, to believe that he knows more about civil government than we do. Faith is the great need of the church to-day."

Capt. Johnson sat musing, crossing and recrossing his knees and spitting vigorously into the grate. At last he said: "I am in for it this year; but afterwards, I promise you, parson, you will not find me engaged in the low-down, mean, dirty business of toting around assessment blanks."

CHAPTER XV.

MORE ABOUT TAXES.

ALL were surprised by the exclamation of Capt. Johnson. After a protracted silence, Mr. Smith said: "Give us another." The response was:

"*Principle 12.—Government should collect no more taxes from the people than are needed for its modest support.*"

"Is that in the Bible?" Bob Dodson asked.

"Listen!" said Mr. Jones, reading from Mr. Smith's Bible.

"The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients [seniors, senators] of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts."—Isaiah 3: 14-15.

"Hurrah for the Bible!" cried Bob Dodson, who did not go to church as often as he might. "Are there many such passages?"

"Scores," replied the parson. "The Prophets are full of denunciations of oppression, and of all kinds of oppression heavy taxation is the worst. Other forms, the results of pride or passion, are more temporary; but heavy taxes, like covetousness, tend to grow worse and worse.

"Besides, all the passages which require the govern-

ment to be just forbid heavy taxes. What the people earn is theirs, and to take from them more than is absolutely necessary for the expenses of government is injustice, is robbery. And we may be sure that heavy taxes are odious to Christ, the King, who shall 'reign in righteousness.' "

"Are those who defend high taxes real Christians?" asked the carpenter.

"I was impressed with this evil last year," said the merchant. "I stopped in Washington on my way home from New York, and I went over the new library building. It cost five and a half millions. All this money was taken from the people. A good brick building, large enough to hold the books, could have been built for a hundred thousand. The next Monday was court day in Browntown. The people were shabby. Most of them live in unpainted houses. The contrast between government luxury and the people's shabbiness struck me."

"It is an honor to the country to have such a building," said Capt. Johnson.

"It would be a greater honor to the country," said the merchant, who sold paints as well as dry goods, "to have twenty-five dollars' worth of paint on two hundred and twenty thousand houses, or one of my two-dollar hats on each of two million seven hundred and fifty thousand men, or one of my five-dollar dress patterns on a million women. The true glory of a nation is the homes of its people."

"But we have to pay large salaries to secure the services of capable men in offices," said Capt. Johnson.

"It seems to me that large salaries attract the mercenary ones," remarked Bob Dodson. "Men want

office not to serve their country, not even for the honor of it, but only to draw the salaries."

"If there is anything in what Brother Jones told us here the other day," Mr. Smith said, "it is as honorable to serve the state as the church; and if so, we ought to get as good men at the salaries paid to ministers."

"Let us have another," Bob Dodson said.

"*Principle 13.—Unjust taxes are an abomination to the Lord.*"

"The proof?" demanded the merchant.

"Christ is just, and hates injustice," replied Mr. Jones. "Civil rulers are his ministers. The use of unjust means for their support must be odious to him."

"What taxes are unjust?" asked Capt. Johnson.

"Every one should pay according to his means," said Bob Dodson. "Any other tax is unjust."

"And therefore very hateful to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," added Mr. Jones. "All taxes collected from the needs of the people, all taxes that increase the cost of the necessaries and comforts of life, that is, all indirect taxes, are unjust and an abomination in God's sight."

"What are indirect taxes?" asked Bob Dodson.

"Taxes indirectly collected," the merchant explained. "Thus an import duty on cloth, for example, is paid at last by the person using the cloth. It is merely advanced by the importer, the jobber and the wholesale and retail merchants; but they get it back when the cloth is sold to the consumer."

"And a profit on it, too," the parson added. "The tax increases the cost of the goods on which profits are

made. If the tax is one dollar, and each of the four classes makes a profit of ten per cent., forty cents is taken from the consumer and given to the merchants, without any advantage to the government. This is unjust. But the chief injustice is that the people pay for the support of the government, not according to their abilities, but according to their needs. The one who needs most pays most, and not the one who has most. This is wicked."

"Indirect taxes are very easily collected and cause less complaint than any other form of taxation," said the tax assessor, "because the people don't know it when they pay them."

"Should we prefer our convenience," the merchant asked, "to obeying God and having his favor?"

"The fact that the people do not know when they pay these taxes," said Mr. Jones, "is a disadvantage. They are less careful in watching the expenditures of the government."

"Are not these indirect taxes arranged for the benefit of the monopolies?" asked the carpenter.

"For that reason also they are hateful to God," said the minister. "But indirect taxes are not the only unjust ones. All taxes that increase the cost and price of products are unrighteous. For example, if houses are taxed, fewer will be built, and the price of houses and house rent will be raised. If factories are taxed, fewer manufactured goods will be made. If bank stock is taxed, there will be less capital in banks, for no one is compelled to put his money into bank stock; the rate of discount will be higher, the expense of doing business will be greater, and the prices of retail merchants will also be higher. This is called the shifting of taxes.

All taxes that are or can be shifted are, like indirect taxes, unjust."

"What about privilege taxes?" asked Capt. Johnson.

"They are shiftable, and therefore immoral," said the minister. "For example, no one can be a drayman here in Browntown unless he previously pays five dollars to the corporation. This tends to diminish the number of teams able to haul furniture or other goods from one part of the town to another and thus raises the price of hauling."

"Are such taxes always shifted?" the merchant asked.

"They are not, and no one can tell in advance whether they will be, nor afterwards whether they have been partially or wholly shifted. In a community where the demand for houses is stationary or decreasing, the tax on houses cannot be shifted. In a town fully supplied with banks the tax on banking capital will be paid by the owners of bank stock, for they would rather pay it than go out of business."

"It is a small matter, anyhow, if a man does not know it when a tax is shifted upon him," Bob Dodson remarked.

"Sin is never a small matter," said the minister. "From the doubt of our first parent has proceeded all the misery there is in the world. If a finger mortifies, the whole body dies unless it is cut off. These taxes operate in another way. By raising the price of products they hinder the demand for them and thus help to produce what is called overproduction. It should be called underconsumption; for in truth there can be no overproduction until all are more than supplied with all the comforts of life. This 'overproduction,' caused partly

by wicked taxes, stops the factories, discharges workmen and lowers wages."

"What does it amount to, anyhow?" asked Bob Dodson.

"It has been estimated that the taxes on the needs of the people, such as most of our taxes are," replied Mr. Jones, "cost a family having an income of three hundred dollars a year one-fourth of their income. Most American families have a less income than that."

"How can that be?" Bob Dodson said. "My taxes last year were only two dollars."

"You paid the tax in the increased price of everything you or your wife bought," said Mr. Jones. "And others, having like burdens, were prevented from building or enlarging their houses, so that you lost many days' wages."

"Seventy-five dollars?" exclaimed Dodson. "It would have bought a Sunday bonnet and dress for Sophy, and the children would go to Sunday school more regularly, for they could always have a nickel to put in the collection. And I could fix myself so I wouldn't be ashamed to go to church, and buy that book on carpentering I have wanted so long, and subscribe for the *Christian Advocate* for Sophy, and the *Youth's Companion* for the children. It's worth looking into."

"But I trust, my brother, that you will not look into it as a matter of dollars and cents," said the minister. "That is a very low view to take of it. If you only look at it that way your interest in the tax question will grow less when times get a little easier. Study it as a question of right and wrong. Look at it, as Christ did, through the law and the prophets. Fight wicked taxes

as a Christian, because you fear God and love men, because Christ died for you."

"Your remarks on the assessment blank, a while ago, parson," said Capt. Johnson, "satisfied me that taxes on personal property are unequal and unfair."

"Mere guesswork," the merchant said, "either by the assessor or the one assessed. For example, I don't know what goods I have on hand till I take stock next January; and then I won't know what I can sell them for. I can know what I hope to sell them for; but hopes are not always realized."

"It is a fact," Mr. Jones added, "that in the cities, where the personal wealth of the country is concentrated, the taxes on personalty are less than in the country. The personal taxes are wicked, hateful to Christ, because they are unequal, unfair to the poor, merely arbitrary."

"Can't that be remedied?" the carpenter asked.

"For hundreds of years the effort has failed," Mr. Jones replied. "The difficulty is inherent. Mr. Smith cannot tell what money his goods will bring. Capt. Johnson can't help him. The only way is to make the assessment low; and the more property there is the wider will be the margin of doubt, at the lower edge of which the assessment must be placed. If all men were as unselfish and as honest as the angel Gabriel, the tax on personal property would be unjust and wicked."

"Are there any just taxes, parson?" Bob Dodson inquired.

"Several," was the reply. "The tax on land values, the income tax, the tax on inheritances and legacies, and within moderate limits the poll-tax."

"What's the difference between these and the other taxes?" Bob Dodson asked again.

"First, they are fair," the preacher answered. "Each one contributes to the expenses of the government according to his ability. Secondly, they are certain; no one can shift his burden onto others. Thirdly, all paid goes into the public treasury. Fourthly, they do not raise prices, hinder production, or decrease the demand for labor or the wages of the laborer. Fifthly, they are not arbitrary, not guesswork. Land lies out of doors, and the assessment of one lot or field helps in assessing the adjacent lots or fields. The amount of the inheritance or legacy is known, for it passes through the courts. It is harder to know one's income for the past year, but this can be ascertained. Sixthly, they are felt, and every tax-payer will be a reformer of any public abuse that may exist. Have I given you reasons enough, or shall I add more?"

"Enough, I think," said the merchant. "But do you hold that the Bible, that Christ, commands us to adopt any one or all of these taxes?"

"Christ, as the fulfiller and as the author of the law and the prophets which forbid oppression," the minister said reverently, "prohibits unjust taxes. And by forbidding wicked taxes he requires us to adopt just and righteous taxes."

At this moment two gentlemen came in to talk to Mr. Smith about some private business, and the company broke up.

Capt. Johnson and Bob Dodson walked away together. The latter said: "I am glad you will get out of the assessment business."

"I have been sick of it for some time, ever since

Judge Per Centage swore in his personalty at three thousand four hundred and twenty-five dollars and forty-nine cents. What could I do? If I tried to do anything I would make a life-long enemy and very likely fail."

"And the parson has made a single-taxer of me, I guess," said the carpenter. "For of all the righteous taxes he mentioned the tax on land values seems the best, the most easily levied and collected, and the freest from fraud."

CHAPTER XVI.

IMPORT DUTIES.

On the next day, Sunday, after the morning service, Col. Brown accosted the Rev. Jacob Jones in the yard of the Covenant Church: "I have heard from my young friends, Miss Jenny Smith and Mr. Robinson, about your legal-theological inquiries, and wish you to come to my house to-morrow night."

Mr. Jones promised to go. On arriving he found Miss Jenny Smith, who had come in the afternoon, and Mr. Robinson, with whom our readers are acquainted, and Col. and Mrs. Brown. The Colonel was a skillful lawyer, who had little time for politics and who was somewhat skeptical. Mrs. Brown was fair, fat and forty.

Mr. Jones was so full of his subject that he was easily uncorked and announced his fourteenth maxim as follows:

"*Principle 14.—Import duties are forbidden, and free trade between nations is commanded by God.*"

"That is a very sweeping statement," said the old lawyer. "It will require strong proof to sustain it."

"And strong proof shall be offered," replied the minister. "I ask none of you to accept my statement, but I do ask all to study the Bible, and the other means through which God makes his will known to us. I offer five proofs that the principle is true, any one of which ought to convince any candid person."

"Proceed," said Col. Brown.

"First, it is a deduction from the doctrine of human brotherhood—a truth very closely connected with the doctrine of the unity of God, and very plainly and frequently asserted in the Scripture, taught by physical science and confirmed by history and observation. The unity of mankind is threefold. There is a unity of blood: all men belong to one species; they are descended from the common parents; by birth they are brothers. There is a unity of disposition: in spite of the difference in language, habits, family training, religion, etc., human nature is the same the world round. There is an economic unity: all tribes except those which have degenerated into savages have wants which they wish to satisfy by exchanging the products of their labor for the results of the labor of others. From this unity flows the brotherhood of all men of all lands and races. It is the first duty of brothers to help each other. The only way that men separated from each other by language, religion, social customs and distance can help each other is by exchanging the products of their work, that is, exchanging work with each other. Whatever hinders this exchange, like import duties, is therefore opposed to the will of our common Heavenly Father."

"Very well argued," said the old lawyer.

"I see one flaw in it," the young lawyer said. "Although the different nations are prevented from exchanging goods by protective duties, yet they can exchange ideas."

"Nations will not visit each other merely to exchange ideas. Commerce is necessary to disseminate knowledge. When an end is commanded, the means necessary to that end are enjoined. If I hire a man to plow,

it is his duty to harness the horse. If, therefore, it is the will of the Heavenly Father that the nations should communicate to each other their discoveries and inventions, it is also his will that they should trade freely."

"The means are commanded with the end. Isn't that good law, Jack?" Col. Brown demanded.

"But we can send the heathen the Gospel even if we don't trade with them," said Miss Jenny Smith, the secretary of the Young Ladies' Missionary Society.

"How will the missionaries travel if there is no commerce?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"By refusing to trade, or by hindering trade," the parson answered, "we tell the heathen that we are not willing either to help them or to be helped by them, or, in other words, that we are not industrially their brothers. When the missionaries say that we are brothers, having one Lord and one Savior, whom will they believe? Which should they believe, the words of a few missionaries or the laws of a great nation? For the sake of the conversion of the heathen our tariff should be conformed to our religious theories. The products of our factories, except the distilleries, will help the preaching of the Gospel; but the heathen cannot buy of us unless we buy of them; and import duties stop or hinder our buying."

"I'll make a note of that, with your permission, parson," said Col. Brown, "and perhaps I'll use it in the next campaign."

"I reckon your first argument will stand," Mr. Robinson remarked. "What is the second?"

"Nature declares the will of its Creator. On surveying the globe we find that each country, nay, every province of each, has its peculiarities of soil and climate,

of woods and mines, and that each nation has its peculiarities. Each land and each people, we may infer, is especially adapted to the production of certain articles. As all lands now raise most staple articles, we have not studied the subject very carefully, but we know enough not to plant orange groves in Tennessee nor sow rye in Florida. We find that these different regions are connected by oceans, rivers and railroads. Is not God's will very plainly revealed by these circumstances?"

"I'll make a note of that too. If they call on me to speak next fall I'll make the Republicans squirm," Col. Brown exclaimed.

Motioning to her husband to be quiet, Mrs. Brown said: "Proceed, please."

"No one who has studied the character of Jehovah, as it is revealed in the Scriptures, can doubt that it is his wish that his children, the different nations of the earth, should live in peace with each other. The means are connected with the end; he who desires the end wishes the means too. The best means known to us to promote peace is the general interchange of products. Each land, every nation, is peculiarly adapted to the production of some article desirable to all. When every people is dependent upon others for most of the comforts and conveniences of life, and when, by this interchange, mutual knowledge and kind feelings have been greatly increased, both the comfort and the sentiments of mankind will tend to prevent war. Tariffs, whether for revenue or for protection, check this mutual exchange of the products of labor, prevent the knowledge it creates and hinder the growth of the kind feelings which naturally spring from mutual knowledge and assistance.

Unless we mistake the character of our Father in Heaven, we can, therefore, not doubt that they are abhorrent to him."

"This also seems sound to me," said Miss Jenny, "and by itself establishes your principle. But you have other arguments."

"Import duties are unjust," replied the minister, "and therefore hateful to a just God."

"I don't see that," objected the Republican lawyer.

"Each one should contribute to the expenses of government according to his ability."

"Yes, I grant that," Jack admitted.

"Now, import duties collect from every one according to his necessities. Our neighbors, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Hendrickson, have about the same income, but one has only a wife, while the other has five children and an invalid sister and mother to support. They ought to pay equal sums to the government; if any difference is made, Hendrickson, who has the large family and the invalids, should pay less than Jackson. But through indirect taxation he pays several times as much. Can any one suppose that this is not an abomination to our Lord Jesus Christ?"

"No sensible man can, I am sure," Miss Jenny exclaimed. "Please proceed."

"My last argument," Mr. Jones continued, "is that import duties are so mingled with political corruption that they must be hateful to a holy God. This is especially true of protective duties. The temptation is too strong for human nature. It cannot be resisted. While many people in England, in the early part of the century, were starving, the land-owners, to maintain and increase their rents, kept up the duties on 'corn' or wheat.

Last summer, when the times were very hard, when multitudes had no work, the Republican party, which contains as good people as there are on earth, adopted a new tariff which would raise the cost of many of the necessaries of life; and it was done so as to favor trusts."

"I do not want to hear that party defamed," excitedly cried the young lawyer. "My father was a charter member of it. My mother thought more of it than of anything else, except her church. She was, let me tell you, the best of women. How patient she was during her long and painful illness!"

"I should not think that any real man," Miss Jenny interrupted him, "would prefer the interests of such a party to the welfare of his country and the truth of God. My father has told me that it deluged the country in blood; and now it is rotten with corruption from core to circumference."

"Not half as bad as the Democratic party—the party of Jeff Davis and Andersonville," the lawyer retorted. "My mother suffered so much and so long and so uncomplainingly."

Jack Robinson had not seen Miss Jenny alone since they parted at her gate on the previous Friday. Now they were very plainly incensed at each other. He thought that she had spoken slightingly of his mother and of the patience with which she had borne the pains of her protracted illness—an offense which no man can pardon; and her womanly feelings were shocked, that a leader of the Christian Endeavor Society should prefer the interests of a corrupt party to the truths of the Bible and the happiness and welfare of mankind. Mr. Robinson was at fault; for he knew, as a lawyer, that the virtues of his excellent parents were not competent

witnesses to prove the good character of protective tariffs until he had proved the connection between the two.

After an awkward silence, Col. Brown said: "Your views, Brother Jones, are rather extreme; but they afford a broader moral foundation for the Democratic party to stand on."

"If true, they condemn the Democratic party as well as the Republican, though perhaps less severely," Mr. Jones answered. "The principle forbids protective tariffs, the Republican doctrine; tariffs for revenue, with incidental protection, which is the Democratic doctrine; and tariffs merely for revenue, which is the English policy."

"I fear that you are somewhat of a crank," Col. Brown responded.

"I am not careful as to that," rejoined the minister; "for I say with Paul, 'Let God be true, but every man a liar.' My appeal is to God. His will about taxation must be wise and good. It is not surprising that men should have fallen into error on this subject. Although the work of Christ had been described by the prophets, there was not a man on earth when he came, unless it was John the Baptist, that understood his sacrificial and atoning work. If the world has now lost sight of another part of Christ's work, it should not amaze us. He said: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.' So now we must say that he that loveth his political party, Democratic or Republican, or the Constitution of the United States, or his inherited political principles, more than he loves Christ, is not worthy of him and cannot be his disciple."

CHAPTER XVII.

ABOUT MONEY.

"VERY few church members, I think, could stand that test," said Mr. Robinson.

"All real ones could," Miss Jenny rejoined. It is likely that the lawyer's estimate of church members was more accurate than the young lady's.

Mrs. Brown, who had gone out, returned with five saucers of ice-cream and a plate of cake on a waiter. While the company was enjoying this unexpected treat, Miss Jenny devoted herself to Mr. Jones, and Mr. Robinson talked to Col. Brown. When all had returned their saucers to the waiter, Col. Brown requested the minister to continue, as it was still early.

"A subject very closely related to taxation," said he, "is the currency—money."

"How so?" Jack Robinson asked.

"Because every state which collects and disburses a large revenue must, in doing it, create the currency for the people." The minister continued: "If the United States would accept certificates of deposit of grain in New York and Chicago elevators, or copies of Webster's spelling-book, or glass beads, in payment of taxes and postage, within three months they would be current coin in every city and county between the two oceans."

There is little doubt about that," said Col. Brown.

"But they could be so easily counterfeited," Mrs. Brown, who had returned to the parlor, objected.

"For that reason they would be an inconvenient currency," her husband replied. "But they would circulate if they would buy postage stamps and pay duties."

"But there is no intrinsic value in glass beads," Mr. Robinson remarked.

"Nor in spelling-books, nor in grain certificates, nor in bank notes, nor in greenbacks, nor in gold or silver coin," said the minister, "so long as they are used as money. The glass beads could be worn as ornaments, the paper could be used to paper a room, the gold could be melted into jewelry, the spellers could be used in school, and they would have an intrinsic value, a use in and of themselves, while so used. They could all be reconverted into money, but their intrinsic utility would at once cease. Utility is always intrinsic; things are useful or useless in and of themselves, because of the qualities they have or lack. But value is never intrinsic, but always extrinsic; for it depends upon the relation of the article, in the opinion of men, to other articles."

"Very well put," exclaimed Col. Brown. "The ambiguity in the word 'value,' Jack, misleads old men as well as young men."

"What is money?" demanded Miss Jenny.

"It is a tool used within the limits of a state or a nation for the exchange of property," the minister explained. "It serves as a tool because it is used as a representative of property, because it can be kept, and can be subdivided and reunited."

"Please explain," said Mrs. Brown.

"My neighbor, Sam Johnson, last August had a hun-

dred watermelons. He wanted to get some dry goods. Mr. Smith had the goods, but he did not want a hundred melons; so he sold his melons and bought the goods. That is, he exchanged the melons for dry goods, and he did it by means of money. If there had been no money, he could not have made the exchange."

"I understand now," said Mrs. Brown.

"If there were no money," the minister continued, "Mr. Smith would have to raise melons or do without them, and Sam would have to weave his own cloth. In other words, money is essential to civilization. Without it we would be barbarians, having only such food, clothing, furniture, books, pictures, as we could produce ourselves. Without it, co-operation, mutual helpfulness would be very difficult, almost impossible. Money is the soul of civilization, the distinction between the civilized and the savage.

"Money can serve as a tool for exchanging property only because it is a representative of property. It is honest only when it represents property honestly. If at one time the same amount of money is the equivalent of more property, and at another time of less property, the currency is unsound and dishonest. In other words, only when general prices are stable is the money honest.

"When the price of some particular article varies it indicates a variation in the supply; if low, that it is large, and if high, that it is small. The changes in the price are beneficial, for a low price encourages and enables the people to use an abundance, and a high price keeps a scarcity from being turned into a famine.

"But when the prices of all commodities either rise

or fall, it indicates a change in the quantity or value of money, for money can vary in value. When general prices rise it indicates a depreciating currency; when they fall, an appreciating currency. These changes in general prices, in the value of money, are great national sins which cry to the God of justice for vengeance. The greatest of these is an appreciating currency, a rise in the value of money and a fall in the value of commodities. God seldom fails to punish the people guilty of this wickedness with hard times, poverty, pauperism and all their brood."

"Why do you call these changes in general prices, or, if you choose, in the value of money, sins?" asked Mrs. Brown. "They are something the people cannot help."

"Because of a fundamental principle," replied the minister, "which may be stated as follows:

"*Principle 15.—Every government should provide honest money for its own people.*"

"The value of money, like that of everything else, is governed by the supply and demand," Mr. Jones explained. "When the supply of any article diminishes and the demand remains stationary or increases, its value rises, and when the supply increases it falls. Money is no exception to this law. When general prices rise the government should make less money, and when they fall it should make more money."

"The government can't make money," exclaimed Mr. Robinson, dogmatically.

"Excuse me. If the government collects and disburses large revenues, it can and does and must make money," Mr. Jones replied, meekly. "It must decide for itself,

no one can decide for it, what it will receive for taxes and its other dues, and what it will pay for services; and whatever it receives will circulate, will be the currency of the people."

"The parson has you there, Jack," Col. Brown exclaimed.

"'A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still,'" Miss Jenny quoted in a whisper.

Mr. Robinson heard her and it did not soothe him any, and he said more dogmatically: "It will be fiat money."

"If I give an order on myself for ten bushels of corn, it is good for the corn; it is worth the corn, although, of course, it may be called a fiat order. The economic service or work done by any good government in preserving the public peace is the greatest and most valuable to the people; for without it all other work is impossible. If the United States gives an order on itself for one dollar's worth of such work, it is good for that work; it is worth it. Call it fiat, if you choose; but the work the government does in doing justice is worth what it costs; if it is not, there is need of reform."

"How shall it be known whether general prices are rising or falling?" Mrs. Brown asked.

"The wholesale prices of all the leading commodities," her husband answered, "are published every morning, and have been for a hundred years."

"The work of keeping general prices steady," the minister added, "would be purely mathematical. The future comptroller of the currency would be as free or freer from corrupting influences than the present one. At the end of each week or month he would know from the reports of hundreds of produce exchanges and whole-

sale markets whether general prices were rising or falling, and could judge whether the issue of money should cease or should be enlarged. After the principle was adopted the work would be almost as mechanical as that of the weather bureau."

"Why is the failure to provide an honest currency a national sin?" asked Miss Jenny.

"Because of cash transactions and because of deferred payments," the minister answered. "The customary retail prices do not closely follow variations in the value of money, but lag behind it or precede it. If, therefore, the nation allows its money to fluctuate in value, it robs either the buyer or seller every time a purchase is made.

"The wrong it does in deferred payments is much greater. John Doe agrees to pay Richard Roe five hundred dollars after five years. That is, he agrees to give him after five years the quantity of general commodities which five hundred dollars will buy at the time the contract is made. At that time, we will say, the five hundred dollars will buy one average horse, a hundred bushels of wheat, a thousand pounds of lint cotton, fifteen hundred yards of domestic and a set of parlor furniture, or other commodities for which these will exchange. Before the payment is made the government or nation reduces the amount and increases the value of money, so that five hundred dollars will buy two average horses, two hundred bushels of wheat, two thousand pounds of cotton, thirty hundred yards of domestic and two sets of parlor furniture, or other goods for which these can be exchanged. The wickedness of this act is indescribable. Satan himself would blush, if he could blush, if he were guilty of it. The state has changed the con-

tract between John Doe and Richard Roe, and the contract made by it for them is entirely unlike that made by themselves. Then it adds usury to the amount it has contracted for John Doe to pay. And finally it uses all its powers to force John Doe to give to Richard Roe the value which he never promised to pay, and interest on it."

"The contract was to pay the money," Col. Brown observed.

"Neither John Doe nor Richard Roe want money," the minister replied. "They both want what the money will buy. Their confidence in the government, that it would preserve unaltered the value or purchasing power of the money, makes the action of the government in changing its value more base; for it has betrayed the confidence reposed in it by the people."

Opening the big Bible that lay on the center table, and turning to Amos 8: 4-8, the minister said: "Here is a passage which illustrates my meaning. The ancient money was not minted, but weighed. The shekel was Jewish money. Listen:

" 'Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy even to make the poor of the land to fail, . . . making the ephah small and the shekel great. . . . Shall not the land tremble for this and every one mourn that dwelleth therein?'

"This fall in general prices or rise in the value of money was the work of those who used false balances to weigh the shekel. But it was unchecked by the government. Because of it all that dwelt in the land mourned as our people have mourned since 1893, and Israel went into captivity.

"As I have the Bible open I will read some other

passages. Money is the weight or balance or measure by which all work and goods are compared with each other.

" 'A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight.'—Proverbs 11: 1.

' 'A just weight and balance are the Lord's: all the weights of the bag are his work. It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.'—Proverbs 16: 11-12.

" 'Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment [government], in meteyard, in weight or in measure. Just balances, just weights and a just ephah shall ye have. I am the Lord.'—Leviticus 19: 35-37.

"The Lord notices our business transactions and is displeased by any fraud. The greatest fraud is for the government to alter the value of money, as our government has been doing and is doing now. We may be sure that our sin will find us out, that the Lord will visit us for it."

"You have said nothing, Parson, about the legal tender quality of money," said Col. Brown.

"It flows from its nature," was the reply. "What is good enough to pay to the nation must be good enough to pay to any citizen. As long as the state collects debts for its citizens it must define lawful money."

"But our money should be equal to gold," Mr. Robinson affirmed.

"Why?" asked the minister.

"Because—why, because it should be."

"That is said to be a woman's reason," Miss Jenny remarked.

"For the sake of international commerce," Mr. Robinson replied.

"First, I remark that there is no international money.

Gold coin, as soon as it crosses the boundary, is no longer a legal tender. It is not counted, but weighed. It is regarded simply as bullion. And secondly, only about one out of a million of our business transactions is with foreigners. Shall the government compel all the other transactions to be more or less dishonest for the sake of the millionth one? Foreign commerce is only barter; money, as such, does not enter into it."

"But gold is more stable in value," Mr. Robinson said.

"I don't agree with you," Col. Brown said. "The price of silver and the price of commodities in general have kept together of late years."

"But our currency should be redeemable in gold," Mr. Robinson asserted.

"Why?" After pausing in vain for an answer, Mr. Jones added: "There is no good reason. General prices are a surer standard of value. And for government to make its currency redeemable in gold is to abdicate its duty to provide honest money for its own people, because the value of gold is determined partly by foreign nations. Moreover, the necessity of redeeming in gold helps the money sharks to contract or expand the currency and thus alter its value and rob the people. As long as the government undertakes to redeem its money in gold it will be a partner in all the villainies of the stock exchange."

"If our money is not redeemable in gold we will have an inflated and depreciated currency like the Continental bills and the Confederate notes," Mr. Robinson argued stoutly.

"Not a good demurrer, Jack," said the old lawyer. "The Revolutionary fathers and the men of the Southern

Confederacy were not trying to establish an honest currency, but were sacrificing everything on the altar of independence. A nation that can keep its bonds at par can keep its currency at par."

"It can keep the currency at par much more easily than its bonds," the minister said, "because its people are obliged to have currency and are not compelled to buy bonds. The government can discredit any currency by simply refusing to accept it for taxes. Thus the United States depreciated its own greenbacks between 1862 and 1866 by refusing to accept them for import duties."

"At par with what?" sneered Mr. Robinson.

"At par with wheat and cotton, with meat and meal, with food and clothing, with men's blood and women's tears; for men will watch and work, aye, and fight too, if need be, for anything that the government will accept for taxes: provided always," Mr. Jones added, "that the government does not issue more notes than it can redeem in a reasonable time by doing justice or by other service.

"Every government is compelled to create a currency for its own people by deciding what it will receive for taxes. Every government that fails to make this currency honest, or that delegates the power of making money to private persons or corporations, or that surrenders the control of the value of its currency to foreign nations by making it redeemable in gold or silver, commits a grievous sin against Jehovah, to whom a false balance is an abomination."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SILVER QUESTION.

"If it is not too late," Mrs. Brown said, "I would like for you to tell me about the free coinage of silver."

"That subject does not fall into the line of the present discussions," Mr. Robinson objected.

"Why not?" Miss Jenny demanded.

"Because these discussions proceed on a moral and religious basis," Mr. Robinson answered, "and the free coinage of silver is a purely political question, and the leading issue between the two great parties."

"Cannot purely political questions be looked upon from the standpoint of morality and religion?" Miss Jenny asked again. "Can one political party or two remove any subject from the dominion of God by putting it into their platforms? Are you of Senator Ingalls' opinion, that the ten commandments have nothing to do with politics?"

"No, I would not go that far," replied Mr. Robinson. "But it seems to me irreverent to drag the Bible and religion into a question so fiercely disputed as the free coinage of silver."

"Is the sun defiled by shining into polluted places and purifying them?" again demanded Miss Jenny. "The more musty a room is, the more it needs the sunlight. Just so the question of the free coinage of silver needs

the sunshine of God's truth because it has been debated solely as a matter of expediency?"

"That is the Democratic position, but we Republicans look upon sound currency as a point of national honor."

"If you are willing to call upon national honor to throw light upon the question, why do you refuse to allow the light of God to fall upon it?" Miss Jenny responded.

"National honor and righteousness are the same," the lawyer answered.

"Are they?" the minister asked. "Righteousness is humble and looks up to God; honor is proud and looks down on its neighbors. Righteousness leads frequently to repentance; honor boasts of its self-consistency; righteousness forsakes the faults of the past; honor clings to them and defends them. National honor has shed much blood and caused great misery. Honor is a nobler god than expediency or Mammon; but to follow national honor often leads us to forsake God."

"I have no objection to Mr. Jones discussing this question as a citizen," said Mr. Robinson. "He has the same right as any other citizen to have and express an opinion about it."

"If I cannot discuss it as a minister of the Gospel of Christ, as a student of God's will," replied the preacher, "I shall not talk about it at all. And I shall expect my opinion to prevail over all others."

"Excuse me," Mr. Robinson objected, "but is not that rather dictatorial, rather—rather popish?"

"Not at all. It would be if I tried to force others to embrace my opinions by civil or ecclesiastical pains or penalties. But I do not desire any such aid. My Lord came into the world to teach men, to help them to learn truth—all truth necessary and useful to us. He went

away, died, that the Holy Spirit might come to convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. To expect the Holy Spirit to convince the world of the great sin it has committed in the demonetization of silver is not arrogance, but faith in God; and if the Holy Spirit is stronger than party spirit and national honor, it is the truest wisdom."

"Discuss it, then, any way you please. I don't care a fig how you talk," Mr. Robinson said sulkily.

Miss Jenny looked very much pained at his ill humor. He was falling rapidly in her estimation.

"We are all agreed, then," said Mrs. Brown pleasantly. "I am anxious to hear your opinion."

"I will put it in the form of a maxim," the minister replied.

"*Principle 16.—The demonetization of silver was a great sin against God.*"

"Is there anything about it in the Bible?" asked Col. Brown.

"There is not," was the reply. "None of the old nations committed this great wickedness. But it is a great injustice, and all the passages which forbid injustice forbid it."

"Why is it unjust? That is what I want to know." Mrs. Brown was the speaker.

"One-half of the world's money before 1873 was silver," returned her husband. "By demonetizing silver the supply of money was decreased and its value increased to the profit of those holding investments the principal and interest of which were payable in money."

"Moreover, the law of God requires that the will of the people be obeyed," the minister continued. "The

great majority of the American people wish the free coinage of silver. They may be wrong; the presumption is that they are right; but, right or wrong, God commands, 'Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say.' Not until this command is obeyed will the currency be stable or confidence be fully restored."

"Why do you say that the great majority desire the free coinage of silver?" Mr. Robinson asked. "We beat the advocates of free coinage in 1896."

"Because all the parties except fragments of the Democratic and Prohibition parties advocated free coinage in 1896. The difference between the two leading parties was that one favored it conditionally and the other unconditionally.

"The will of God in regard to the free coinage of silver may be learned from nature and from history. The Creator is revealed in creation as the character of an author is revealed in his book. The qualities of the two royal metals show that their Maker intended them to be used alike so far as coinage is concerned. They resemble each other so closely in the qualities that fit them for coinage that there can be no doubt that the Creator intended and wishes them to be used alike; that it is God's law that if gold is freely coined silver should be. Both, when pure, are of one grade, wherever found; there are not different kinds of pure gold or pure silver, as there are of many other metals. Neither rusts. Both can be divided and reunited without loss. Both are rare. Every quality that fits one for coinage adapts the other to it also. Both would be treated alike at the mint if men feared God.

"From God's providence also we may learn his will, as a man's deeds reveal his character. But caution should

be used in trying to find the divine law from history, because the free acts of men are mingled with it. When, however, a truth is written in the history of every land and every age, we should not shrink from embracing it. Thus, when we find that there have always and everywhere been about as many women as men, we must conclude that monogamy is the law of God, and that polygamy is a sin against him. So, also, when we notice that previous to 1873 both gold and silver were used as money throughout the world without any evil results, and that the variations in their value as bullion when compared with each other were slow and caused no harm, we must decide that bimetallism is God's law and that the demonetization of silver is wicked rebellion against God."

"Such words do not become a minister in speaking of a policy adopted by most Christian nations," said Mr. Robinson.

"Are they not truthful?" Miss Jenny retorted, and, addressing Mr. Jones, she asked further: "How did the nations fall into this sin?"

"Various events helped to deceive them," was the minister's reply. "The example of England was one. For nearly sixty years it had been nominally under a monometallic standard; and it was not noticed that while silver could be exchanged for gold across the channel it practically had bimetallism. In the United States neither gold nor silver was in circulation in 1873; the silver dollar was worth, as bullion, a little more than the gold dollar, so that it seemed unlikely that much silver would be brought to the United States mint to be coined. Yet in spite of this it was only demonetized by an oversight. Other nations were alarmed and thought

themselves compelled, in self-defense, to demonetize silver.

"There was also a great force behind the movement. Every creditor would be benefited by the decrease in the amount of money of final redemption and the increase in its value. The rich govern the world."

"There are many good people, Christian people, benevolent people, among the rich. How could they agree to it, or consent to profit by it?" Miss Jenny inquired.

"Its effects appeared gradually. They seemed to be the results of natural law—of inventions, discoveries, social and industrial progress—and not the effects of human wickedness. It is human nature for those having fixed incomes, from investments or from salaries, to rejoice in low prices. Moreover, no individual action will remedy the crime. If a purchaser pays more than the market price he benefits only the seller. All these causes combine to befog the intellect. A lie repeated often enough and in forms enough and by a great number of persons will be believed. The daily papers are mercenary; their great expenses make them dependent. An average citizen who has read every morning for ten years that gold is the only metal fit to coin legal-tender money out of cannot be greatly blamed for believing it at last."

"You spoke of the demonetization of silver as a greater wickedness than was known to ancient nations?" Col. Brown said, interrogatively.

"In former ages, when power wished to oppress, it used force," was Mr. Jones' reply; "now it uses fraud and falsehood. The necessity of employing them is a compliment to our age. But it is meaner both to rob and lie than it is merely to rob."

"'Fraud,' 'falsehood,' 'rob,' 'lie,' these words shall never, with my consent, be applied to the Republican party," Mr. Robinson cried. "If the Bible commands bimetallism, I shall turn skeptic."

"The platform of the Republicans approves it conditionally, Jack," dryly remarked Col. Brown.

"If the Bible indorses Bryanism, socialism and anarchy," repeated Mr. Robinson, "I will be an agnostic. If God does it, I'll——"

"Are you not thoroughly ashamed of yourself?" broke in Miss Jenny, highly indignant.

Mrs. Brown acted as a peacemaker for the second time, and asked quietly: "What should we do about it?"

"Repent of the sin, convert, turn to God; forsake this abominable wickedness and obey God's law," replied the minister. "This is the only way to treat sin. There is no other safety. This is the highest wisdom."

"What? Without waiting for the action of other nations?" Col. Brown asked, winking at Mr. Robinson.

"Suppose the burglar, the drunkard, the profane swearer, should say, 'I will forsake my sin when all others do it;' would he ever reform? The Bible, conscience, commands that sin be at once forsaken. Each one must repent for himself, independently of the action of others. If he does not, if he waits for others, he shall bear his iniquity. Nations can do wrong, and when they have done wrong they should repent and forsake their sins, each one for itself."

"But will the free coinage of silver by the United States alone, independently of foreign nations, be safe?" asked Col. Brown, winking again. "Will we not be deluged with cheap silver? Will not the gold leave us?"

"It has already left us, I think," Mrs. Brown re-

marked. "I have not seen a gold coin for three years."

"The only safety is to forsake sin," the minister answered. "It is never safe to continue in sin. Righteousness, conformity to God's law, like honesty, is always the best policy. The free coinage of silver by the United States will so increase the demand for silver and decrease the world's demand for gold that it will go far to re-establish the old ratio. It is also likely that other nations may follow our righteous example. But, whatever be the result, we should do right."

As the clock struck eleven the party broke up. Mr. Robinson said, "Miss Jenny, may I have the pleasure of seeing you home?" But she replied, "Mr. Jones passes my gate, and I will not trouble you." He turned to the right after leaving the gate, displeased with Miss Jenny, irritated by Col. Brown's winks, and not much pleased with himself.

Mr. Jones and Miss Jenny at the gate turned to the left. The latter said: "I am surprised at Mr. Robinson. That he, a member of the church and a leader of the Y. P. S. C. E., should prefer a corrupt political party to the Bible and God's will, and assert his intention to renounce Christianity rather than submit, astonishes me."

"Somewhat like the Rev. Dr. Luther Calvin Wesley, is he not?" suggested Mr. Jones.

"I can understand Dr. Wesley," replied the girl. "He would reduce his family to want by accepting and advocating the political system of the Bible. But Mr. Robinson would lose nothing by doing it."

"Pardon me, but he feels that he would lose much," the parson returned. "He was born and brought up a

Republican. All the sentiments of love, all the memories of home, are bound up with its creed."

"Wasn't it ridiculous, his bringing his mother's sickness and sufferings into the discussion of the tariff?"

"All these he thinks he would have to surrender before he could embrace the truth. It is a wrench at his heart-strings. Dr. Wesley thinks so too. So we should have patience with them."

"I don't see it. How conceited! To set himself up as wiser than the Bible, as superior to God."

They walked together in silence. At her gate Miss Jenny said: "I am very much interested. Can you not come to our house to-morrow night?" Mr. Jones promised to do so.

As they fastened up the house Mrs. Brown said to her husband: "You and Brother Jones were hard on the young lawyer. But he was quite self-conceited. His assertion that he would reject the Bible if it did not agree with his opinion shocked me."

"I think he fancies Miss Smith; and she knows it," her husband returned. "But she was more shocked than you by his self-confidence."

CHAPTER XIX.

USURY, OR INTEREST.

THE next night, Tuesday, after tea, there were assembled, in Mrs. Smith's pleasant parlor, Mr. and Mrs. Smith and their daughter, Miss Jenny, Col. and Mrs. Brown and the Rev. Jacob Jones. They had assembled, on Miss Jenny's invitation, to discuss further the money question. After the salutations Mr. Jones remarked: "The currency problem, we decided last night, is a branch of the taxation question. Whatever the government accepts for its dues will be the currency of the people. Money is, therefore, always and necessarily the creation of the government, since it only can decide what it will receive for taxes, and it is the duty of every government to supply just and honest money to its own people. This it can do by increasing the amount of money when it is rising in value, and by diminishing the issue of money when its value is falling. I propose that we discuss to-night the question of usury or interest."

"'Usury or interest,'" repeated Miss Jenny; "I thought they were different; that usury was excessive interest."

"There is a difference in law," said Col. Brown. "Usury is illegal interest; but in morals and in economics there is little or no difference. Morality is not a difference between six and ten per cent. If a high interest is injurious to society, a low interest will also injure

the public welfare. I may also say that the usury laws do little good, but rather raise the common rate of interest."

"Another illustration of the truth," the minister interposed, "that laws which are not founded on the higher law are mischievous. There is no difference in morals between five and ten per cent., and the human laws that try to create a difference do only harm."

"It is a very large subject," said the merchant. "All business is conducted on the basis that interest is right eous. If it is wrong, some branches of business, as life insurance and banking, must be entirely abandoned, and the methods of doing all business must be modified."

"That is an argument for thoroughly considering the subject," remarked his wife. "It is impossible for any one to live a holy life and at the same time engage in an unrighteous occupation or carry on a righteous trade in an unrighteous manner."

"Let us discuss the matter thoroughly," added Mrs. Brown.

"The definitions of money do not justify interest," Col. Brown said, reflectively. "If it is a means or tool for exchanging property, the grocer should not pay one-third of his profits for the use of a wheelbarrow to carry his provisions to his customers. If it is a yardstick for measuring values, the dry-goods merchant should not be charged one-third of his profits for a yardstick. If it is a record or representative of value or property, the farmer should not pay a quarter of his crop every year for recording the title deed to his farm. I cannot think of any definition of money that will justify interest."

"We may, I think," the minister said, "state the principle as follows:

"*Principle 17.—Interest, or usury, is stealing. The government should discourage it.*"

"Whew!" exclaimed Col. Brown. "You have undertaken a big job."

"But not too great a work for Christ and the Holy Spirit to accomplish," the parson said, reverently. "The first argument is that interest is extortion. It differs radically from hire or rent. If a boat is hired or a house or farm is rented the owner gives something and the borrower or renter gets something for the rent or hire. The boat or house wears out, the field is exhausted by cropping, and the owner loses for the time the use of the field, the house or the boat. The loaner of money loses nothing, for he has no present use for the money; otherwise he would not loan it. The money he receives when the loan is repaid is as good as that he loaned, unlike the field, house or boat. The lender plainly does not give anything for the interest he collects. The borrower does not get anything. The field yields a crop, the house shelter, and by means of the boat fish can be caught. But money is barren; it yields nothing. Interest is robbery."

"You overlook one point," said the merchant. "The money can be changed into a field, a house or a boat, and the loan of the money is equivalent to the loan of the field, house or boat."

"Is it?" questioned the lawyer. "The owner of the field will receive it back with the loss inflicted by gathering a crop; the house and the boat will be nearer the end of their usefulness, or the house may be burnt and the boat wrecked. There are losses and dangers connected with such loans, from which the lender of money is free."

"The money-lender has his losses too," said Mrs. Smith. "Some loans are not repaid."

"Payment for such risk," the preacher replied, "might not be unjust. But such insurance from loss would not be interest. In the case of well-secured loans, 'gilt-edged mortgages,' United States bonds, etc., it would be a zero quantity.

"Of all robberies usury or interest is the greatest. I guess (a mere guess)," continued Mr. Jones, "that for every dollar taken by the burglars and pickpockets the usurers take a thousand; that for every dollar of unnecessary taxes collected by the government the usurers collect ten; that for every dollar placed by the state in the tills of trusts and monopolies five dollars of interest goes into the usurer's hands."

"If interest be extortion," Col. Brown remarked, "the usurers are the greatest robbers."

"It is a robbery that nothing can bear," added the parson. "One dollar put at compound interest in A. D. 1 would now amount to a sum inconceivably great. All the property in the world would not pay the debt; the globe itself, if turned into solid gold, would not pay it.

"God, some ancient has said, is a mathematician. What has such monstrous results cannot accord with his will."

"Yet I suppose that there was money at interest at the beginning of our era," said Mrs. Brown.

"Interest and capital, creditors and debtors, men, women and children, when usury and other forms of robbery had eaten out the heart of Roman civilization, were destroyed by the savages," Mr. Jones continued. "Like causes produce like effects. 'Be not deceived,' is the exhortation. 'God is not mocked; what-

soever a man sows, that shall he reap.' When interest and oppression have taken their wealth from the people and made their lives a mere struggle for existence, our civilization also will perish."

"But there are now no barbarous nations able to overthrow it," Miss Jenny objected.

"There were none able to overthrow the Roman civilization," replied the minister. "The German savages were as inferior in military skill to the Roman legions as our Indians or tramps are to our regular soldiers. When the trunk of the tree is rotten and only the bark is sound, it falls before a slight breeze. It is useless to speculate when or whence will come the breeze that will fell our tree of liberty that has sheltered so many so long.

"The debts of the world will never be paid under present conditions. All hope of paying off the national debts of Europe has long been abandoned; if the interest is paid the governments think they do well. The private indebtedness of the world is a much larger sum. It doubles itself at compound interest in every dozen or fifteen years."

"The productiveness of industry is also increasing very rapidly," the merchant said.

"Very true," the lawyer responded. "But it does not increase at compound interest."

"When shall we look for the sheriff?" asked his wife.

"I can not tell," replied Col. Brown. "Already the larger part of the wealth of the American people is in the hands of a very few; and the process of concentration is going on. Our condition is alarming; like a pyramid resting on its apex, a very little force will overturn it, and crush its stones to powder."

"Of all forms of robbery," the parson resumed, "interest is the most demoralizing; because it is legalized; because it teaches the people, with all the authority of the law, with all the influence of the nation, that it is right to take the property of others without making them any return. From this idea has sprung the notion that excessive business profits are righteous, that it is right for private parties to grasp or accept natural monopolies for their private advantage and to form trusts to increase their profits. While sanctioning interest we cannot logically condemn these other forms of oppression. If it is righteous to use the currency, which is always the creature of government, as a means of private gain, it is proper to use other functions of government for private profit. So that the defender of usury can not vigorously attack the trusts and monopolies and the oppressive taxation which is advantageous to private persons."

"Please make that clearer," Miss Jenny said.

"In order that the people may exchange their work, may help each other, and thus live in amity and friendship," the minister explained, "it is the duty of every government to provide honest money for its own people. If it is proper for the usurers to make a profit out of this duty of government, it is proper for monopolists to make a profit out of other governmental functions. The usurers and monopolists stand on the same ground: instead of supporting themselves by their own industry, they draw their profits from the powers of government, which should be used for the benefit of all the people.

"Usury is injurious in other ways. It encourages reckless business methods, by encouraging borrowing.

"Next, it throws all the risks of business, of bad sea-

sons, bad crops, fire, sickness, death, a contracting currency, etc., on the borrowers, on those least able to bear them.

"Interest discourages industry. It is to the advantage of society that all should work; that those having money should build houses, stores, erect and operate factories, build and fit out ships for foreign or domestic commerce, etc. Interest allows them to live without work, contrary to the decree of the Creator.

"From all these considerations it seems clear that interest is condemned by the law of God, and is a crime which the state should prevent. Now we will examine the revealed law of God."

"Stop a minute, Parson," said Col. Brown, winking at Miss Jenny. "Suppose I imitate our friend Mr. Robinson and turn skeptic or atheist if the teachings of the Bible do not suit me."

"That was so irreverent," exclaimed the girl, "almost blasphemous!"

Replying to the lawyer, Mr. Jones said: "That would be a far more manly course than to profess reverence for the Bible and at the same time reject or pervert its teachings. If those who cannot receive all the teachings of the Bible on all subjects, without any reserve or qualifications whatever, would profess themselves infidels and leave the church, the Gospel, religion, would be a great gainer. It is the traitors within, and not the skeptics without, who injure religion and hinder the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the world. Mr. Robinson's position, that he will be an atheist rather than accept God's truth about silver, is more manly and less injurious than that of the Rev. Dr. Luther Calvin Wesley, who has turned his back on the political teaching of the

Bible and yet professes himself to be a teacher of it. But I hope that the Holy Spirit will show both Jack and Dr. Wesley the folly and wickedness of their positions."

CHAPTER XX.

THE BIBLE ON USURY.

MRS. SMITH, who had left the room, now brought in a basket of her fine apples, which interrupted the talk. After they had been eaten, Mr. Jones asked Miss Jenny to read the Bible law about interest. "Please read Exodus 22:25."

"If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury."

"Our missionary board has money loaned at interest," exclaimed Miss Smith. "How do they reconcile it with this text?"

"They draw a distinction between commercial loans and benevolent loans, between lending money on which a profit is expected and lending money to buy the necessaries of life," replied the minister, "and they hold that the text does not prohibit commercial interest, but only refers to the latter. The distinction is fanciful. Mr. A, a manufacturer, has fifty hands to pay on Saturday night; collections have been slow; he is really fifty times poorer temporarily than any one of them, for he has fifty families depending on him. Would not a loan to him fall into the second class? Mr. B, one of his hands, has been sick and needs money to buy medicine and food; he as plainly belongs to the first class, for he expects to recover and make a profit out of the loan.

"Let us remember as we hear these texts that, since the Son of God was the angel of the covenant, they are the law of Christ our Savior. Please read Leviticus 25: 35-38."

"If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God."

"Why has our pastor, Dr. Wesley, never preached from this text?" Mrs. Smith demanded.

"It would not do," her husband answered. "Many of the members are living on their property. If he did it he would have to resign his charge and he would have trouble to get another."

"He could have made a good sermon from it," said Mr. Jones; "for it suggests five arguments against interest: 1. We are all liable to wax poor. 2. The poor cannot thrive under usury. 3. Fear God; the borrower is his child; would you charge God interest? 4. The sovereignty of Jehovah, who forbids usury. 5. The goodness of God in providing for us. The next text we will hear suggests a sixth argument against interest: its abolition will make good times. Please read Deuteronomy 23: 19-20."

"Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee

in all that thou settest thine hand unto in the land whither thou goest to possess it."

"Please explain the text," said Miss Jenny, looking up from the big Bible. "The Hebrews were forbidden to take interest of a Jew and allowed to take it of a foreigner."

"They would live in ages and engage in occupations in which interest was paid and received," the minister explained. "That happened to the slothful servant in the parable of the talents and the pounds who was blamed for not collecting usury. In such cases they were allowed to receive interest. In our age and country, which does not accept the Mosaic law, that is, Christ's law, about interest, I suppose that it is lawful for a Christian to receive and pay interest. No true Christian, of course, will refuse to pay what he has promised to pay. It is not possible for any tax-payer to avoid paying interest on public debts; and it would be difficult for any one to avoid receiving some of the benefits that come from interest, since so many of our colleges, schools, libraries, museums, hospitals, etc., are supported by endowments. Wages, salaries and profits would be larger if there were no interest; as Christians thus indirectly pay interest, they should receive it when it is due them. At the same time Christians should never cease asserting that God forbids interest."

"You seem to contradict yourself," the lawyer remarked. "You say that interest is extortion, robbery, and that Christians may receive it. May they rob?"

"The apparent difficulty is illustrated by the Mosaic law about diseased meat," Mr. Jones replied. "The Jews were forbidden to eat the flesh of animals which

had died of disease, but they were allowed to sell or give it to Gentiles living with them."

"Our laws forbid the sale of such meat altogether," Col. Brown remarked.

"But if a large proportion of our population preferred such meat or liked it gamey, high, ought the law to forbid its sale?" the minister asked. "In order for men of unlike views to live together a certain toleration of practices which are disapproved by the wiser class seems to be necessary. Thus the British in India protect idol temples from desecration and idol worship from insult. Perhaps this might be included in religious toleration. Polygamy has no such defense. And yet the British law in India recognizes polygamy. And it is right. For, although polygamy is a sin, yet sexual anarchy would be a greater sin. Just so interest is wrong, forbidden by God, yet commercial anarchy would be worse. If there be only a choice of sins, as is the case with us, so long as all our business is conducted on the interest basis, Christians do well to practice the least."

"Very well explained," said the lawyer.

"That the passage read last by Miss Jenny does not change the law about interest," the minister continued, "is plain from subsequent references to it. Psalm 15 asks, 'Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?' and replies, 'He that putteth not out his money to usury.' "

"If that rule were applied," Mr. Smith remarked, "the Covenant Church would not report so many members to presbytery."

"Those you did report," returned Col. Brown, "would be a greater power for good. The indifference of the

church to the material welfare of the people, its heartlessness, if you will excuse the word, is the greatest obstacle to the progress of religion."

"In the eighteenth and twenty-second chapters of Ezekiel," Mr. Jones resumed, "interest is classed among flagrant crimes. Nehemiah (see the fifth chapter) put an end to it for a time in Judea."

"If interest is robbery, which I do not admit——" Col. Brown began.

Mr. Jones interrupted him: "I am glad that you do not admit it quickly. Opinions hastily adopted will be as hastily abandoned. Please meditate the question thoroughly."

"If interest is extortion," the lawyer resumed, "government should prevent it."

"I am pleased that you use the word 'prevent' and not prohibit," the minister remarked.

"Why so?" Mrs. Brown asked.

"Because the political conscience of the people is so easy," returned Mr. Jones. "When a law has been passed forbidding a crime they think their whole duty done, although the law is instantly a dead letter. 'Prevent' is the right word."

"How shall the government prevent interest?" Mr. Smith asked.

"On that point the Bible is silent. It states principles and leaves us to apply them," Mr. Jones continued, in an abstracted manner. "For example: although the Bible nowhere mentions bank notes, it forbids counterfeiting and makes it the duty of government to prevent it. The English prevent it by plain printing, the Americans by elaborate printing on bank notes; both modes, if effectual, might possibly be called scriptural.

The most scriptural method would be the one that would best prevent or lessen the evil."

"'Lessen the evil,'" repeated Mrs. Brown. "I thought the Bible dealt in absolute prohibitions; that it had no toleration for sin."

The minister said: "When crimes cannot be prevented by government they should be lessened. There are two instances in the legislation of Christ, which was proclaimed through Moses. One was the custom of blood revenge, and the other of divorce. The custom of blood revenge was closely connected in the Oriental mind with some of the noblest feelings of the human heart, with family affection and with the sense of justice. Moses could not destroy it; and if he had done it he would have injured the noble feelings on which it was founded. He did not try to do it. He limited it to the murderer, forbade any money compensation, and appointed cities of refuge, in which the one who accidentally killed another, removed from the sight of the avenger of blood, might dwell securely. The Oriental likewise thought that it was not good for a man to marry unless he could dismiss his wife if she displeased him. To prohibit divorce while this idea remained would discourage marriage. Moses therefore limited the evil by requiring legal forms in divorce and by making it final, forbidding the divorced pair to live together. The practice of usury is so closely connected with all our business and our benevolence that it cannot at once be ended. But it can be lessened.

"The first step is to thoroughly convince all the people that interest, whether at two or twenty per cent., is extortion."

"What next?" asked Miss Jenny.

"Granting that interest is robbery," replied the lawyer, "every contract into which it enters, of which it is a part, is tainted with fraud and should not be enforced by the courts."

"That would not stop it," the merchant returned. "Honest men do not keep their contracts because the courts compel them."

"It would stamp usury with public condemnation." replied his wife.

"Newspapers containing offers to pay interest might be excluded from the mails, as those advertising lotteries are," said Mrs. Brown.

"Why not pass a law making usury a felony?" Miss Jenny asked.

"Such a law at the present time would be both useless and wicked," the minister replied; "useless because it would be a dead letter, and wicked because it would require some to break their contracts.

"The government," he continued, "should not borrow any more money on interest. Indeed, national debts on any terms are forbidden by those texts which require the people to support the powers ordained of God."

"Have you not something else to propose?" Col. Brown asked Mr. Jones.

"It is the duty of every government to provide stable and honest money for its own people," he replied. "This it can only do by issuing more money when general prices fall and by issuing less when the prices of all goods are rising. Is there any better way for the government to issue money than by loaning it without interest to those needing money and able to furnish security for its repayment?"

"What effect would this have upon usury?" the merchant asked.

"If we had an honest currency and general prices varied very little, the larger part of the money now used in speculation would be thrown upon the loan market and reduce the rate of interest. The government loans would have the same influence."

"The expense ——" began the merchant.

"Would be small—only the printing of the notes and the cost of examining the security—and would be borne by the borrowers," the minister said, completing the sentence.

"But the corruption," the lawyer objected.

"It has to be seriously thought of. The plan was worked for many years in the colony of Pennsylvania without much corruption. Yes, the times have changed. But those wishing to borrow the smallest sum would, of course, have the preference, and men who wish to borrow only twenty-five or fifty dollars do not, as a rule, have much political influence. General rules would be adopted, and it is possible that the administration of the national loan office might be as pure as that of the post-office."

"The Constitution would have to be amended," said the merchant.

"The issue of money seems to be a necessary function connected with the coining of money," replied the minister.

"We would have a depreciated currency, like the Continental bills, the Confederate notes and the greenbacks during the war, or the wildcat bank notes before the war," the merchant objected, "if the government made the money."

"During the Revolutionary and Civil wars everything was sacrificed to carrying on the war. There was no effort to make sound money. The more bills the wildcat banks printed the more they could loan and the more interest they could collect. But in loaning money without interest there would be no profit from its issue and no temptation to an over-issue. There would be some debate as to the standard, whether it should be the average of general prices during the last ten years or during the last twenty or thirty or forty years. This point settled, the rest of the work would be purely mathematical. The principle adopted that general prices should be stable, there is little reason to doubt that the mathematical work would be done as accurately and as honestly as that of the United States treasury."

"You have not satisfied me," the lawyer remarked.

"Then you should suggest some better plan for keeping our money stable in value and decreasing the sin of usury."

"Is this the same as the postal savings banks?" Miss Jenny inquired.

"Altogether different," was Mr. Jones' reply. "The object of this is to make the money honest and sound and to abate interest. That is founded on the right of the people to have some safe place to keep what they have earned. Postal savings banks exist and have proved beneficial in almost every civilized country except our own. That they have not been established here is another sign that bankers have more power here than in any other land."

The party now broke up. As the guests left, Col. Brown was called back by Mr. Smith, and Mrs. Brown and Mr. Jones walked on together. She said: "Your

remark about the power of the Holy Ghost impressed me. I wish that you would see Mr. Robinson."

"Why?" asked the minister.

"The Colonel is the best of men and husbands. But he is, as you know, a little inclined to be skeptical. He has been professionally associated with Mr. Robinson, and has had a great respect for his Christian character. The position that Mr. Robinson took the other night, that he would rather surrender his faith in the Bible than his opinion about the free coinage of silver, will have an unfavorable influence, I fear, on my husband."

Mr. Jones made the promise just as Col. Brown overtook them.

CHAPTER XXI.

GOD'S LAND GRANTS.

THE next morning, Wednesday, November 1, 1897, the Rev. Jacob Jones, as he had promised Mrs. Brown, went to the office of John Robinson, Esq., and was fortunate enough to find him disengaged. He plunged into the middle of his subject, saying: "I want your help in winning Col. Brown to faith in Christ."

"Why so?"

"He has very kind feelings for you and a great respect for your Christian character, and when, night before last, he heard you prefer to the Bible an opinion which he looks upon as having no good foundation, it tended to increase his leaning to skepticism."

"I did no worse than Dr. Wesley. When you trod on his toes he took no further interest in our discussions; and he is a minister."

"His fault may be worse than yours, Jack, and yet it may not be so injurious to Col. Brown. Loyalty to the Bible would cost him more than it would you; for it would throw him so far out of sympathy with the people, who in politics believe in the platforms of the Republican and Democratic parties and the United States Constitution, instead of the Bible, that he would not be an acceptable pastor. To earn his bread he must be disloyal to the Bible in political matters. He veils his disloyalty better than you do, for he uses his zeal for

the salvation of sinners, and his industry in visiting the sick, as a cloak for his neglect of the political teachings of the Bible. His dissimulation may increase his guilt before God, but it diminishes its evil influence among men. And he is removed from Col. Brown by his whole manner of life; so that you have a greater influence with him than Dr. Wesley has."

"It is hard to forsake the political teachings of my mother. Republicanism was a part of her religion."

"I do not ask you to do it. I mean no offense; but she was a believer in Bryanism: for she favored the free coinage of silver, paid an income tax without complaining, approved the reorganization of the supreme court to secure a just decision, opposed trusts and justified the heavy tariff duties only as a necessary war measure. You will best honor the memory of your mother and father by adhering to their doctrines and not by opposing them."

"Do you make the Bible a Democratic book?" the young lawyer asked, impatiently.

"By no means. The Democrats are as far astray as the Republicans. Whoever puts a platform on a level with the Bible thereby rejects it as God's word."

"What would you have me do?"

"Calmly and thoroughly re-examine with prayer the position you took the other night, that you will adhere to your political opinions, no matter what the Bible says. If it is right, explain to Col. Brown, and if it is wrong renounce it openly."

Just then Col. Brown walked into the office and began: "About that land case, Jack——" But seeing the minister, he added: "It can wait while we have a chat. What I admire, Parson, is your earnestness. I like to

see a carpenter or lawyer or doctor believe that his occupation is the most important in the world, and I like to see a minister believe the Bible. By the way, as Jack and I were about to talk about a land case, what does the Bible say about land?"

"The Old Testament may be regarded as a legal treatise about land tenures," the minister replied. "In the beginning of Genesis the ownership of land by God through creation is asserted, and his conditional grant of it to men and their forfeiture of it are recorded. Then the land is granted anew to Noah's descendants conditionally. Next the land of Canaan is given to Abraham's seed, who are not, however, to take possession of it till the Amorites, to whom it had previously been deeded by God, had forfeited it by non-compliance with the conditions of their deed. Joshua and Judges tell how the Jews were put into possession of their inheritance. The Prophets explain the conditions of the deed made by God to the Jews and beseech them not to violate them. Kings and Chronicles relate how the conditions were broken and the land was taken from them."

"It seems to me," remarked Col. Brown, "that I have read something like this in a book called 'The Bible and Land.' "

"I re-read this book last week," said the minister. "It is the best book on the land question."

"And a good book for lawyers to read, Jack," added the old lawyer.

"What does the Bible teach about land?" asked Mr. Robinson.

"First, it teaches that God, as the Creator, is the original and supreme owner of all land," replied Mr. Jones. "By land we mean the surface of the globe, with all on

it and under it that is not the result of human labor—the natural forests on it, the air above it, the mines beneath. It is the material out of which labor produces all that satisfies human desires."

"This is certainly a religious truth," began Col. Brown.

"If true religiously, why is it not true politically and legally?" inquired Mr. Robinson. "If true at church, is it not true across the street in the court-house? If true on Sunday, why is it false on Monday?"

"The second truth that the Bible teaches about land is that God gives land to men through government, not to the race as a common possession, and not to nations, but to individuals," continued the minister. "The proof? All the laws of Moses concerning land; and if the God who spoke to Moses was the Second Person of the Trinity, they are the land laws of Christ. In addition to the laws of Moses the whole of the book of Joshua or of Jesus (Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua) proves it. It follows that if God gives land to individuals the private ownership of land is righteous."

"But how does God give land to individuals?" asked Mr. Robinson.

"By the same instrumentalities by which he gives life," was the reply. "A long train of second causes reaching back sometimes beyond the dawn of history."

"It is objected that the origin of the private ownership of land is generally violence or oppression," said Mr. Robinson. "Might made right. The strong seized the land by force or fraud, and made those who needed to use it their serfs and dependents. 'A stream can rise no higher than its source.' "

"By the same argument no one has a right to his own

life," replied Mr. Jones. "We live because our savage ancestors killed their foes in battle. If property in land is founded in theft, our ownership of our lives is based on murder."

"Prescription! There is a limit beyond which neither law nor equity nor abstract justice should try to pass. The wrongs of the distant past cannot be righted; the attempt to do it will create greater wrongs," was the reply of the older lawyer.

"The private ownership of land involves slavery," was Mr. Robinson's next objection. "Since men cannot live without land, the ownership of the land involves the ownership of those who cannot live without the land. This is slavery."

"Freedom is not personal independence, but mutual dependence," was the preacher's reply. "The man who is his own master, who owes no service to any one, to whom none owe service, is not a freeman, is not a man at all in any true sense, but an unhappy creature, the most wretched of human beings. I, for instance, owe it to you to tell you what God says about land; if I concealed God's truth it would be a sin. I am in this respect your servant, your bond servant, bound by the laws of God, of society and of my own nature to serve you.

"We cannot exist without land; and this fact makes us dependent upon land-owners. This dependence God meant to bind families together; and when the design of the paramount land-owner is complied with it will have that effect. The home and the family are very closely connected. Without a home there can be no family life, and without the full ownership of the home the family life cannot be perfect. Because no one can live

without land, the members of the family live together and form the unit of society. For society, the true social state, is composed of families rather than of individuals.

"It is only because the conditions of God's land grants are disregarded by human laws and customs that the private ownership of land is ever an evil. This fact," continued Mr. Jones, "leads to the third truth taught in the Bible about land. God's grants of land are conditional, and not absolute. They are leases, and not deeds in fee simple. He gives land to individuals, but only to be used for the purposes and ends for which he created it. If the conditions are not complied with, the title to the land fails; it reverts to the Creator; and sooner or later he will resume the possession of it. So the Amorites lost Canaan when the cup of their iniquity was full; and for the same reason the Jews were exiles from the land given to the seed of Abraham."

"It does not need any revelation to teach this," remarked Col. Brown. "It is a doctrine of theism. If there be a God he could not and would not allow land to be permanently used for any other purpose than the one for which he made it."

"In the fourth place," continued the preacher, "the Bible teaches that God made land and gives it to men to support population in such circumstances as are most favorable to health, piety, morality and intelligence. In creation he sought 'a godly seed.' The command, 'Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth,' does not refer merely to numbers. He wishes his children to be happy and virtuous.

"In order, therefore, to know how God wishes land to be used and what are the conditions of his grants of

land, we have only to inquire what use of land will most surely and generally promote the health, piety, virtue and culture of the people."

"That is an easy inquiry," returned Col. Brown. "The ownership of a home promotes not only family love, but all the virtues. It encourages industry,—because there is always some improvement to be made in the family home,—thrift, independence, intelligence. Every good plant grows from the ownership of land in small quantities."

"As every ill plant," rejoined the preacher, "from its ownership in vast bodies—pride, luxury, extravagance, sensuality."

"Therefore, we may safely assert," Mr. Robinson said, "that the condition of God's land grants is that it is to be used for homes for the people, to be held in small quantities."

"We are ready now, I think," remarked Mr. Jones, "to state the principle that should govern our land legislation:

"*Principle 18.—Civil government, as the agent of the Supreme Landlord, must adopt such laws as will promote the division of land among those who will make the best use of it.*"

"The principle goes further than our agreement," Mr. Robinson said. "In our talk we referred only to homes, but the principle includes farms, mines, and sites for stores, shops and factories."

"But the ownership of fields, mines and business sites has the same beneficial effects as the ownership of homes," Col. Brown replied. "I do not think the principle is too broad. Of course it does not look to

such a minute subdivision of land as would destroy its usefulness."

"What are the scriptural proofs of the principle?" asked Mr. Robinson.

"You will find them in 'The Bible and Land,'" replied Mr. Jones. "It would take too much time to refer to them all. The list of texts bearing on the land question fills six pages of small type."

"The book proves the principle beyond the shadow of a doubt," added Col. Brown.

"How is the principle to be enacted into laws?" asked Mr. Robinson.

"Three plans have been suggested," Mr. Jones answered. "One is to impose a limitation on the amount of land that may be owned by any one. The second is to ordain that the only title to land shall be use and occupancy. And the third is the single tax."

"What is the single tax?" Mr. Robinson inquired. "It has always puzzled me."

"It means the removal of all taxes on consumption, which bear harder on the poor than on the rich, which raise prices, hinder production and lower wages, by concentrating all taxes on the value of land. It is a just tax; it can not be evaded; all that it costs the people goes into the public treasury."

"That is a simple proposition," returned the young man.

"Your perplexity," Mr. Jones said, "arises from the fact that Mr. Henry George accepted and adopted the title 'the single tax' to designate his own theory. The phrases he used in 'Progress and Poverty' correctly described it. In italics he said that his proposal was '*to confiscate rent*' or '*to appropriate rent by taxation.*' If

land is not rightfully private property (as he taught) its rent should be confiscated or appropriated. But confiscation or appropriation is not taxation, and to call it so is confusing.

"But these phrases," Mr. Jones added, "were not liked, because few agreed with Mr. George that landowning is robbery. To avoid their unpopularity, he acquiesced in the use of the term 'single tax.' But he called his own theory the 'unlimited single tax' and the real single tax the 'limited single tax.' As taxes are limited by the real or imaginary wants of government, the two phrases were as absurd as 'non-fluid fluid' and 'fluid fluid,' and they have passed out of use.

"As a remedy for the evils of our civilization, he proposed to punish as a crime the ownership of land, which is approved by the human conscience everywhere and always and by the word of God.

"Moreover, taxes can only be levied upon property; but he proposed to place them all upon land while denying that land was rightfully property.

"I do not wonder," Mr. Jones concluded, "that you have been confused by such a jumble. Thousands of others have failed to 'see the cat' that was buried in so much chaff. But the single tax is very simple. It would repeal all unjust taxes and discourage the holding of land idle while men lack homes and the opportunity to work."

"All property should be taxed," said Mr. Robinson.

"There are several objections to that," Mr. Jones replied. "One is that it can not be done. Many kinds of property are intangible; the good will of a newspaper, for example, is worth far more, will sell for more, than its type and presses. So with the reputa

tion of a firm or of a patent medicine, or the copyright of a book. Other property is unknown to the tax assessor and is easily concealed from him, as loans, ledger accounts, bonds, etc. Other property is of uncertain value, as stocks of merchandise, machinery, furniture, etc., in assessing which the rich will be favored because it must be valued at the lower edge of the margin of doubt. The amount of other property will be decreased by taxation. If bank stock is taxed the amount of banking capital will be lessened; and the same is true of almost all property which is the result of human labor. The taxes on other property are shifted or transferred till they are largely paid by the poor. The single tax is a strong contrast to most other taxes; it is the just tax, the righteous tax, the fair tax, the tax that will check no industry, but rather help all."

"Will it not increase the cost and raise the price of farm products?" Mr. Robinson demanded.

"Why should it?" responded Col. Brown. "It is a tax on the value of land and not on the acreage in cultivation; and as land values are so largely in our towns and cities it will be a city as well as a country tax. It will not decrease the amount of land. That cannot be removed from one state to another to avoid taxation. But would it be fair to those who, under our taxing customs, have invested all their property in land which is largely unproductive?"

"'Unproductive land!'" repeated the minister. "While men are idle, and women lack bread, how foolish and wrong it is, and it is solely the result of our methods of taxation. But in answer to your question, I do not think that the single tax would work any hardship to the 'land-poor.' They want to sell; the strong-

est desire of others is to buy and own land; and when the taxes that depress industry are repealed they will be able to gratify this desire. The single tax will raise the value of their lands."

"There are other objections urged," began the young lawyer.

"Let those who urge them propose some better method for carrying out the plans of the Deity in regard to land," the old lawyer said.

"And they should remember, too, that those who reject the teachings of the Bible about land reject the whole Bible, and those who disobey God's commands about land are rebels against him," the minister added.

There was a pause in the conversation, which Mr. Robinson broke by saying: "I have an acknowledgment to make, Col. Brown. I was wrong night before last. The Bible is God's book. It is true, altogether true; just as true in what it says about this world as in what it teaches about heaven. If I can risk the immortal destiny of my soul on the teachings of the Bible, I certainly should be willing to rest the temporal prosperity of my country on them. Colonel, I was wrong, altogether wrong."

Col. Brown was evidently much affected. He moved restlessly in his chair, searched all his pockets for a handkerchief and blew his nose loudly and repeatedly. At last he said: "This does you great credit, Jack, great credit. It is a noble confession." When he had recovered from his agitation, he added: "I shall tell this, Jack, to the young lady whom I have selected as Mrs. Brown's successor in case I am left a widower."

While the young man was blushing, Mr. Jones said: "Please tell the present Mrs. Brown too." Reaching

out his hand and laying it on Col. Brown's knee, he added: "Not only will the Bible secure to every industrious man a home of his own here on earth, where he can sit under his own vine and fig-tree, but it will give to every one who will follow its directions a 'place,' a 'mansion' specially prepared for him by Jesus. Promise me, please, that you will pray over this matter and try to secure the place."

Col. Brown responded in a low tone: "I promise. I will do it."

CHAPTER XXII.

LABOR'S BOOK.

THE Rev. Jacob Jones met Col. Brown near the door of his office ten days later. "Walk in," said the Colonel, "I have good news for you." When they were seated he added: "I took your advice and will apply for admission into the Covenant Church at the next quarterly meeting."

"You have had a change?"

"Yes, indeed; I can say with Paul: 'Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' "

"What made the change?"

"My wife's prayers and Jack Robinson's example," was the reply. "He is a good lawyer for his years. He was provoked the other night into the position occupied generally by the ministers and the church—practical, every-day disbelief in God and the Bible. When he thought it over he renounced this unbelief; and this suggested a thought new to me, that the Bible might be the message of the Almighty to me; and I kept my promise to you, Parson, and read it with prayer, and I have found the Savior."

"My advice is, 'Forgetting the things that are behind, press forward,' " said the preacher.

After sitting silently a little while, the lawyer said: "Your subject interests me. Let us resume it."

"The labor question naturally follows the land ques-

tion," Mr. Jones remarked. "The Bible principles are so plain, almost self-evident, that we can make rapid progress.

"*Principle 19.—The labor question is a religious one.*"

"Why so?" asked the lawyer.

"Because the laborers—and by laborers we mean all who labor for the good of man to satisfy human wants—are the children of God, made in his image and likeness," was the reply. "In dealing with them we deal with their Father in heaven."

"Is 'religious' the word you want to describe it?"

"It at least asserts the truth that the question should be considered in the fear of God and should be discussed and settled by the principles of his revelation."

"Of what use, then, is political economy?"

"It will help us to apply the Bible principles to the labor question. But the sovereignty is in the Bible, that is, in God, and not in political economy."

"No theist can object to the sovereignty of God, and no Christian to the dominion of Christ. What next?"

"*Principle 20.—Every man has a right to work.*

"The proof flows from human abilities and needs. Every man has a pair of hands, and work is necessary to his physical, mental and moral health."

"The doctrine seems socialistic."

"Not at all."

"Would you have the government furnish work?"

"Certainly not. It has none to give. Its sole duty is to do justice. It is the land that furnishes work. It is as natural for men to work as for children to play. All

they need is the material to work with, and the land is the material. All that government should do is to let men work. If allowed they will work. God made the land to be peopled, subdued and ruled by man, that is, for man to work upon and with. Government, as the agent of the real Owner of the land, should carry out his plan. This it can do by abolishing unjust taxation and imposing only just and fair taxes."

"What next?" asked the lawyer.

"*Principle 21.—None should live without work.*"

"The proofs? Revelation and nature. Paul writes: 'If any would not work, neither should he eat.' Of course he does not refer to infants and invalids. Nature, not even tropical nature, not even when she is most generous, gives to none the comforts of life without work."

"Is not that communism?"

"No, it is merely and simply justice. The incomes that come to their owners without labor are derived chiefly from six sources: From interest, from the rent of land, from the private ownership of natural monopolies, from trusts, from stealing and from begging. Most incomes from other sources require labor. The merchant works harder than his clerks, the manufacturer and large planter than his hands. Their work is of a different kind, but it is more fatiguing; the manual laborer sleeps sounder. Generally I suppose they earn their incomes, and they never get them without labor.

"We discussed the usury question at Mr. Smith's the other night, and the best modes of terminating this injustice. Just taxation would very greatly reduce the incomes of idle landlords. When a business is by its very nature such a monopoly that only one man or com-

pany can carry it on, justice requires that the special privileges required by it should not be given away to any citizen, but should be used by the public. As to trusts, justice will kill them.

"Communism demands that the wealth of the nation or its annual product be divided equally among all the people. Justice will give to all according to their work. It is the only remedy for the evils of our civilization that is needed. Those who think that other remedies will be needed must admit that it should be tried first."

"As to stealing," Col. Brown remarked, "it should be stopped, of course. But thieves and beggars work hard for what they get."

"As it is not productive work, it is not labor in the economic sense," said Mr. Jones. "As to the poverty caused by vice or idleness, want is the penalty for it decreed by God; and those who relieve it where there is no promise nor prospect of reformation would display themselves as more merciful than God and try to defeat his justice."

"If radical, you are right," replied the lawyer. "What else?"

"*Principle 22.—Government should not diminish the wages of labor.*"

"By wages we mean the rewards of labor performed to satisfy the wants of men, whether called wages, salaries or profits," the minister explained. "The laborer is entitled to just wages."

"What are they?"

" 'The workman is worthy of his meat.' By 'meat' is not meant a bare subsistence,—a peck of cornmeal and an ounce of salt a week,—but all the comforts of life that

are needed to maintain the self-respect of the workman and an average number of dependents. This is the best definition I can give of fair wages. As self-respect is necessary to the efficiency of the laborer, less than this lessens his work. It also discourages marriage."

"As the average number depending on women for support is smaller, fair wages for them, I judge from your definition, would be less than those for men. But how does government lessen wages?"

"By levying taxes and granting franchises that increase the cost of the necessaries and comforts of life," was Mr. Jones' reply. "It is for these, and not merely for money, that men work. By decreasing the amount of money, and thus making money wages lower and employment more precarious."

"Cannot government raise wages?"

"It can take from some and give to others, and thus raise some wages; but it cannot raise all. It is a judge to do justice, but not a creator to make wealth." The minister resumed:

"*Principle 23.—Men should follow manly, and women womanly callings.*"

"Your Bible is handy—a good sign, Colonel. I draw the principle from Deuteronomy 22: 5:

"'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.'

"I argue from the less to the greater," said the preacher. "If it is an abomination to Jehovah, to Jesus, for a man to wear a woman's garment, or a

woman to dress in a man's clothing, it must be a greater abomination for him to follow a womanly calling and thus lead a womanly life, or for her to adopt a man's trade and thus follow a man's life."

"Modern industry knows little of sex, and knows less every year."

"Is it well for boys and girls, for men and women, to work together, all day and every day, in the factories, shops, stores, offices? It may have some good results, but it has also bad ones, which will in the end overbalance the good. Aside from this, the competition is cruel and heartless. The girl who never expects to support a family, who is perhaps supported by her father, can work cheaper than the boy. The women take less wages than men. The competition reduces men's wages without raising women's wages.

"The competition of the men is less injurious to the women. But they capture the prizes in some woman's trades, as cooking, dress-making and the retailing of dry goods."

"What can the government do to remedy this evil?" asked the lawyer.

"Nothing at all," was the reply. "As the people are the supreme earthly interpreters of the higher law, civil government is helpless in the present state of public opinion."

"Could not the church teach which occupations are honorable for men and modest for women?"

"It could, but it will not. To do it would add nothing to its present popularity or wealth. Any minister who would attempt it would have a heavy cross and would have to follow Christ out of his ecclesiastical camp."

"I would call such indifference to a grave evil, which is injuring both men and women, heartless."

"The ministers call it 'spirituality.'"

"This suggests a question important to me," remarked Col. Brown. "Ought I to join the church while it is so heartless?"

"Christ's example settles that question. He attended the synagogues and worshiped in the temple while its rulers were hypocrites and a generation of vipers."

After a slight pause Mr. Jones added:

"*Principle 24.—Manual labor is Christ-like.*

"In his youth Jesus was a carpenter, doing coarse work with rude tools, sitting on the ground. The last work he did was the most manual, the most servile work known in his age, washing feet soiled with country dust and city mire. He was clad only in a tunic and girded with a towel. I wish that a true picture of Christ washing the feet of the disciples were hung in every parlor, kitchen and work-shop in our land."

"I have heard ministers say that he meant to teach humility by that act."

"It was trifling with God's word. He did teach humility, but the main lesson is that manual work is honorable. It is a lesson that our people need to learn. Our boys become lawyers, doctors, clerks, to earn less wages than they would as mechanics, because they dislike manual work. Our girls, as typewriters, shop-girls and factory hands, earn less, considering their extra expenses, than they would as nurses, cooks and housemaids, for the same reason."

"What remedy would you suggest?"

"The celebration of 'labor day' is a step forward.

Perhaps we might take a hint from the emperor of China, who at the beginning of spring holds the plough in the presence of his court, to show that farm-work is honorable.

"I have one more maxim:

"*Principle 25.—The fourth commandment is chiefly an industrial or labor law.*

"Secondarily it is a law of worship. It resembles other commandments in having a double character. Thus the third commandment forbids both irreverence and perjury; the fifth commands both obedience to parents and love to God; and the sixth forbids both murder and anger. The error of the church is in making that primary in the fourth commandment which is secondary."

"What are the proofs that the fourth commandment is mainly a labor law?"

"First, its institution before man needed to repent or believe. Secondly, its terms: of its eleven parts only two can be applied to worship, and the application of these to worship is obscure. Thirdly, those are enjoined to keep the Sabbath who are incapable of worship, as the cattle. Fourthly, the reasons annexed to it both in Exodus and Deuteronomy. The first is that God rested, and the other is that servants may rest. Fifthly, the Mosaic worship of God was to be performed at a central place, to which the men were to resort only three times a year, but the Sabbath was to be observed weekly. Sixthly, the Sabbath-breaker in the desert was capitally punished, but the Bible does not authorize civil penalties for religious errors. Seventhly, Christ teaches that 'The Sabbath was made for man,' not for God; and

the primary needs of man are bodily, physical. He does not live by bread alone; but he needs bread first in order to pray. So the Sabbath day must first be rescued from toil before it can be devoted to worship.

"It follows that laws against Sabbath-breaking are no more religious than laws against murder or stealing or arson."

"This is the chief obstacle in the way of enforcing the Sunday laws," Col. Brown remarked. "They are regarded as religious laws, and Sabbath-breaking is thought of solely as a sin against God."

"These false notions about Sunday laws and Sabbath-breaking are the effect of the preachers dwelling on one application of the command alone, and that the least important," said the minister. "As the religious teachers of the Jews made the fifth commandment of no effect by their traditions, so by their interpretations our religious teachers destroy God's great labor law. The advantages of a weekly day of rest, moral, mental, religious, physical, are innumerable and incalculable. The Sabbath is the home day of the laborers in which they become acquainted with their children and train them. It is their gymnasium in which tired muscles are strengthened by rest. It is the people's university in which they can spend four years out of every twenty-eight in the study of the most elevating topics and the greatest authors the world has ever known, the character of the Deity, man's origin, duties and destiny; Isaiah, the most sublime of poets; David, the sweetest of singers; Moses, the most instructive of historians; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the best biographers, and Paul, the greatest philosopher. It is the cradle and the fortress of constitutional liberty.

By it the 'hand' became a man and a patriot. It is the crown of our civilization.

"Therefore whoever invades it with secular labor is a traitor to liberty and a foe to labor. His punishment should be certain and swift. But by teaching exclusively and only that it is a day of worship, the church protects the enemies of our liberties and our industries. It does not secure the religious observance of the day by its one-sided teaching. My teacher in theology, grand Dr. Robert L. Dabney, well said: 'There is perhaps no subject of Christian practice on which there is, among sincere Christians, more practical diversity and laxity of conscience than the duty of Sabbath observance.' He did not discover its cause. One-sided teaching will not produce fully rounded character or conduct.

"There is no crime," continued Mr. Jones, "which it is more necessary for the state to punish than Sabbath-breaking. It is easier for one to be honest among thieves, amiable among murderers, or pure among adulterers, than to rest among Sabbath-breakers."

"But the toilers need recreation," the lawyer objected. "Those who have been shut up in factories require fresh air, and those who have had no time to read demand the Sunday papers. To supply these wants some must work."

"As long as they use the Sabbath for these purposes they will have no other time for them. When the crime of Sabbath-breaking is suppressed by justice we shall have a Saturday half-holiday, in which the cities will empty themselves into the country and the mammoth papers will be sold.

"God's zeal for labor is an example which his ministers, the civil magistrates, should follow. The foun-

dations of ethics, of morality, are the character of God, the worship of God and reverence for God. As soon as these foundations were laid in the first three commandments, Jehovah, first of all, ordained that all laborers, even the slaves, the cattle and the strangers, should have a rest-day every week."

"Come to-morrow night, Brother Jones, and we will have another chat. Come before tea," said Col. Brown, as a client entered his office.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL MONOPOLIES.

NEXT evening a very cheerful party assembled early at Col. Brown's house. All had heard the good news about him, and the gladness of the "first love" infected them all. There were Col. and Mrs. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. John Smith and Miss Jenny Smith, the Rev. Jacob Jones and John Robinson, Esq.

"Our topic to-night is monopolies and trusts," said Mr. Jones. "The trusts are artificial monopolies, created and sustained by public injustice. The others are natural monopolies, because of the very nature of their business, because it can all be done better and cheaper by one company than by two or more."

"Please illustrate," said Miss Jenny.

"Street-car lines are a natural monopoly, because there is in most city streets only room for one company to lay its rails, but chiefly because one company can carry all the passengers better and more cheaply than two companies can. If there are two companies, there will be the expense of a double administration and a double plant, without any corresponding advantage. The post-office is another illustration of a natural monopoly. One post-office can carry all the letters; two could do no more at nearly double the cost."

"Are there many such natural monopolies?" Miss Jenny inquired.

"A great many," was the reply, "and their number is increasing. I will name some: Street railways, elevated railroads, underground railroads, streets, gas-works, water-works, electric lights, telephones, electric power in our cities; public roads and turnpikes, canals, railroads, telegraphs, the post-office, the express business, pipe lines, etc., in the country; the administration of justice, the preservation of order and the public defense in civil affairs."

"Is our judicial system a natural monopoly?" Mr. Robinson asked.

"It is a business, a most useful factor in production, since without some method of peaceably settling the disputes that arise no work could be done," was the reply. "One judicial system is better than two; so it is a natural monopoly. The public defense is another. When the Indians threatened one of the territories all business stopped, and one army and navy is more efficient than half a dozen. Why not commit them to corporations? A syndicate of lawyers would administer justice, and the Pinkertons would contract for preserving domestic peace and defense against foreign foes."

"You must be joking, Mr. Jones," said Mrs. Brown. "The idea of putting the administration of justice into private hands is horrible!"

"Why should you suspect me of jesting?" asked Mr. Jones. "Is the supply of justice more important than that of light; public peace than water; the carrying of letters than the carrying of packages or freight or passengers? Yet we give the latter to private parties."

"But it would cause so much corruption if we gave the courts to a corporation," Mrs. Smith objected.

"Certainly it would," the minister admitted. "The

syndicate of lawyers would always be compelled to exert an influence over the legislature in order to defend their special privileges. And this is true also of gas companies, water companies, railroad companies, and all other owners of special privileges. Let me ask a question: Why are our municipal governments a stench in our nostrils and a disgrace to us before the world?"

"It is because the powers of evil are better organized than the powers of good," answered Mr. Robinson.

"Why are they not so well organized in foreign cities?" was the parson's reply.

"It is because there are so many Roman Catholics in the cities," said Miss Jenny.

"There are more in Rome and in Paris than in New York," rejoined Mr. Jones.

"The cause lies in the large foreign population," suggested Mrs. Brown.

"The foreign population of London is as great as that of New York," was the response.

"What is it?" asked Col. Brown.

"The private ownership of natural monopolies, which are more developed here than abroad, is one cause of it," Mr. Jones explained. "The street-car company intends to pay low wages for long hours and expects strikes. It must have a friendly mayor and chief of police if it exhausts its bank account to get them."

"But," Mrs. Brown asked, "do you really think that the administration of justice should be committed to a syndicate of lawyers?"

Her husband answered: "His argument is that it is a natural monopoly, and if it would be shocking to give it into private hands, it is wrong to put other natural monopolies into private hands."

"But for the state to make gas, to carry passengers, freight or packages, etc., is paternalism, is socialism," Mr. Robinson said.

"No more so than to administer justice," was the reply. "The business that is by its very nature monopolistic should be done by the state. A business that can be done by only one should be done by the state. Special exclusive privileges should be granted to none."

"You take the position, if I understand you," the Colonel remarked, "that the private possession of natural monopolies is wrong, first, because justice forbids that exclusive privileges should be bestowed upon any; and, secondly, because the possession of such exclusive privileges always and necessarily leads to political corruption."

"I go further than that," was the reply. "My maxim is:

"*Principle 26.—The private ownership of natural monopolies is a violation of the command, 'Thou shalt not steal.'*"

"You will need strong proof for that," Col. Brown said. "If true, the capitalists who have endowed so many universities and theological seminaries are thieves; those who have granted charters to railroad and other like corporations are their accomplices, and the people are little better."

"My proof is the interpretation of the eighth commandment which is adopted by half the Protestant world and accepted by the other half." And taking a catechism from his pocket, Mr. Jones read as follows:

"'The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.

"'The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth or may unjustly hinder our own or our neighbor's wealth or outward estate.'

"The commandment forbids our charging more or less for any service than it is worth, or paying others more or less than their services are worth," the minister explained. "When a natural monopoly is owned by a private corporation it is an accident, a mere chance, when the command is obeyed. There are a thousand chances to one that the eighth commandment will be broken in any given case."

"Please explain," said Miss Jenny.

"We will take two cases to illustrate—a business that is not a natural monopoly and one that is," Mr. Jones replied. "If Mr. Smith charges too much for selling calico, we go to Jackson's; if Jackson charges too much for his services, we try Jenkins. If, again, the Atlantic Mills charge too much for spinning and weaving the calico, Mr. Smith buys of the Palmetto or the Pacific or the Hoosier Mills. So that in the selling of calico and in other businesses and trades which are not monopolies, we pay just about what is right, and the eighth commandment is not broken.

"The natural monopoly we take for an illustration is the street-car system of Indianapolis, a city covering a wide extent of ground, whose citizens are thus forced to make use of the street cars. As long as this monopoly is private property it will charge the citizens either more or less than the service is worth, but as soon as it becomes the property of the city its charges will be just."

"That is a strong assertion," began Col. Brown.

"Remember," Mr. Jones interrupted him, "that the people of Indianapolis are the only ones interested in the car-fares; the rest of the people of the United States do not on an average spend one cent a year in car-fares in that city. The legislature of Indiana, governor, senate and house, after carefully considering the matter in every light, decided that three cents was the righteous car-fare. A federal judge, after hearing all that could be said on both sides, decided that five cents was the righteous fare."

"A small matter—only two cents," said Jack Robinson.

"It makes a difference of twenty-five or fifty dollars a year to an average family, enough to buy school books and school clothing for a couple of children," was the reply. "And picking pockets is stealing just as much as burglary. Whether the legislature or the judge was right, whether three cents or five cents is the just fare, there is no means of determining. It is merely an accident if the monopoly does not collect more or less than is due it."

"You put it very mildly, indeed," Col. Brown exclaimed. "If it got less it would stop its cars very quickly. It is certain to take more."

"But if the monopoly belonged to the city," the minister resumed, "there is no injustice done by either high or low fares. If the fares are too high, the money goes into the city treasury and will be used in one way or another for the advantage of those who have paid the fares. If, on the other hand, the fares are too low, the deficit must be made up by those who have profited by them.

"In either case substantial justice is done—not perhaps exact justice, for that cannot be expected.

"As there is no clashing of interests, the citizens can approach the question of the proper car-fare in a calm and judicial frame of mind and will be likely to reach a righteous decision. The ownership of natural monopolies by the public interested in them is honest; any other ownership of them is in violation of the eighth commandment."

"There are some monopolies that the public may not care to use," Mr. Robinson objected. "A town may not feel rich enough to build water-works which yet would be a great benefit."

"Better to suffer an inconvenience than to break the eighth commandment," said the minister.

"It was in this way," the old lawyer replied, "that most oppressive monopolies began. Franchises that seemed to be worth nothing and were given away to the shrewd and cunning are grinding the faces of the poor."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RAILROADS.

THE tea bell rang and Col. Brown led the way into the dining-room, where the table was spread with fried chicken, coffee, hot biscuit, butter, peach butter, blackberry jelly, quince preserves, boiled custard and pound cake. After these things had been enjoyed, and when the company had returned to the parlor, Col. Brown remarked:

"We were talking about natural monopolies."

"The railroads," said Mr. Jones, "are another illustration of the truth that the private ownership of natural monopolies is a violation of the eighth commandment. They are unjust to all, to passengers, to employes, to shippers, to towns, to their stockholders and to the government."

"A sweeping charge," said Jack Robinson.

"The passenger fares are arbitrary," resumed Mr. Jones. "There are a thousand chances to one that they are not reasonable, for there is no means, no impartial tribunal, to determine what the honest fares would be."

"Can they not find out how much it costs to carry a passenger?" asked Miss Jenny.

"No, they cannot. To carry one passenger from Philadelphia to New York would cost as much as to carry a thousand, if the railroad men did not know by what route he wished to go and on what day and at what

hour, and whether he wished to ride in a smoking, passenger or Pullman car, and at what station he would get on, and whether he would require a meal on the road. If the fare between the two cities were a hundred dollars, the passengers would be very few. Every reduction in the fare increases the number of passengers and reduces the average cost per passenger. A private company which has to look for immediate profits cannot settle the question.

"The railroads are unjust to their hands," Mr. Jones continued. "They deprive them of Sabbath rest, which is their inalienable right. They neglect, year after year, to provide proper safety appliances, railings along the sides of the tops of freight cars, automatic couplers and air-brakes on freight cars, so that thousands of their hands are injured and hundreds killed every year. In case of strikes they excite public odium against the strikers.

"They treat shippers very dishonestly. To large shippers they give lower rates—sometimes rates that are really unremunerative—and quicker dispatch than they give to smaller shippers. Their course is a strong contrast to the post-office. The man that mails one letter and the firm which mails a thousand, the newspapers that send tons of paper to the office and those which print small editions, pay the same postage and have equal dispatch.

"As it is impossible to discover the actual cost of carrying a passenger, so it is impossible to discover the actual cost of hauling a ton of freight. If the freight cars go empty it seems to cost nothing or next to nothing to haul the freight. There are a thousand chances to one that the charge will be unreasonable; the eighth

commandment requires that it be just, neither too much nor too little."

"Would not the difficulty remain if the railroads were public property?" Mr. Smith objected.

"At any rate there would be no discrimination between shippers and no such trusts as have resulted from such discrimination," replied Col. Brown.

"Mr. A. B. Stickney, a railroad man of long experience," Mr. Jones answered, "compares freight rates to the tariff duties on imports. The duties are imposed to pay the interest on the public debts and the running expenses of government; the freight tolls are to pay interest on railway debts and the operating expenses of the railroads. The duties amount to $200,000,000, the tolls to $700,000,000 a year. The duties are paid by importers, the tolls by consignees. Both duties and tolls are added to the original cost of the goods. Both are ultimately paid by the consumer. Both increase the cost of some goods materially. Both are imposed without reference to the cost; it takes no more time in the custom-house to examine the goods on which there is a high duty than those on which the duty is low, and it takes no more coal to haul first than fifth-class freight. Both duties and tolls look to revenue alone. If Mr. Stickney is right, the freight charges under government control would be substantially honest. The people pay them now indirectly every time they go to a store. If too high, the extra revenue would be used for their benefit; if too low, they would save in their purchases.

"The railroads are unjust to localities. Their discrimination in favor of the cities crowds population into them. 'Instead of allowing the artisan to live in the smaller town,' says Mr. Stickney, 'where it might be

possible for him to own his home, and with moderate expense rear his family in the quiet and amid the virtues of the country, it compels him to live in the vicious tenement house of the crowded city. His children have reeking pavements instead of green fields for a playground; and their ears are greeted with coarse profanity and vulgar language instead of the songs of birds.' "

"Modern inventions, the telephone, electric cars, electric power, would scatter factories and population and stop the growth of cities, if some other force did not prevent," said Jack Robinson.

"That force is railway competition." Mr. Jones continued: "The fact that one-third or one-half of our railroads have gone into the hands of receivers, have failed, although possessing exclusive privileges, is a proof of dishonest mismanagement. The interests of the managers are frequently, perhaps generally, opposed to those of the stockholders. Large salaries will enrich them and impoverish the stockholders. Organizing themselves into construction or car or fast freight or coal or lumber companies, they can make profitable contracts with themselves. By raising or lowering the value of the stock, they can make fortunes on the stock exchange. They can 'wreck' a railroad and become its owners. Their temptations are numerous and often specious."

"It is not necessary to enlarge on that point," Col. Brown said. "Gov. Larrabee's book, 'The Railroad Question,' is well known, and has made the public familiar with this subject."

"The railroads are unjust to the government," Mr. Jones resumed. "Railroad corruption is notorious. Their frauds in carrying the mails are less known.

They perform like service for the express companies and the post-office; but they charge the government eight times as much as the express; and moreover furnish the express with cars free of charge and charge the government an exorbitant rental for postal cars."

"You make the railroad men robbers, regular villains," said Mrs. Brown.

"No, madam," was the reply. "The men are better than the system. You and I would do no better in their place—we might do worse. The system—the private ownership of natural monopolies—is a violation of the law, 'Thou shalt not steal.' The tree is evil and must bear fruit according to its nature. The remedy is to 'lay the axe at the root of the tree.' "

"The practical difficulties in the way of applying the principle to present conditions——" began Col. Brown, after a pause.

"Are very great indeed," said Mr. Jones, completing the sentence. "So are the difficulties of applying the law or principle of gravitation to the building of houses, ships, clocks and balloons, very great. But the architect, ship-builder, clock-maker or aeronaut who should therefore resolve to neglect that principle in his work would fail in his efforts."

"Is it not stretching the principle that the government should do justice to make it compel the state to purchase the natural monopolies?" was a question from Mr. Robinson.

"I believe not," was Col. Brown's reply. "The laws now not only forbid robbery, but fraud. Forgery and obtaining money under false pretenses are as much crimes as burglary or grand or petit larceny. If the private ownership of natural monopolies is always, nec-

essarily, a fraud on all the people, the state's duty of stopping fraud applies to them. And if the government ownership is the surest or best remedy, it leads to that. Of course the principle does not imply confiscation or the repudiation of obligations."

"By no means," said Mr. Jones. "We must keep our word. But if bondholders or stockholders should refuse to exchange their stock or bonds for government bonds, the interest and principal of which would be paid out of the earnings of the natural monopolies—an event which is unlikely—the government has the power to take any private property for public use by paying for it a fair price. Justice, justice alone, is the full remedy for our political evils."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE TRUSTS.

"WHAT surprises me, Mr. Jones," said Miss Jenny, "is that you have said nothing about the golden rule, nothing about the commandment, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' Most of the ministers whom I have heard or read on our social problems have said much about them."

"There are two reasons for their doing so," was the reply. "One is that they can pronounce eulogiums upon the golden rule without injuring themselves; but if they denounced the sins of interest, of unjust and oppressive taxation, of the private ownership of natural monopolies or of the existence of trusts, they would be thought cranks and would lose reputation and money. The other reason is that their regular occupation is to preach the Gospel and not law; and they very naturally fall into the error of thinking that the Gospel, that the golden rule is the solution of the problems of our civilization."

"Is it not so?" Mrs. Smith asked.

"It is not," was the response. "Law, and not love, justice and not mercy, is the solution. The Gospel belongs to the church, justice to the state. When the state has laid the foundation of justice the church can rear on it a temple of love and mercy large enough to shelter every child of Adam. But justice is the only foundation on which love can stand. Amid injustice,

love dies, piety decays, the church becomes an abode of phariseeism and formalism. Justice, like the sun, when it exerts its influence, keeps all the different trades and occupations of men revolving in their harmonious orbits without confusion or clashing. Where it shines the flowers of family love, neighborly kindness and love for Christ flourish. When the church tries to do justice or the state to show mercy, they do harm, and only harm, always and ever."

"The fact that Christ is called 'the Sun of Righteousness' rather spoils your comparison," said Jack Robinson.

"Not at all," replied Mr. Jones. "It is only by Christ's influence, through Christ's book, that righteousness, justice, can reform our evils, can secure work and fair wages to laborers, can stop wicked taxation. He is indeed 'the Sun of Righteousness.' Without a true sociology we cannot see the beauty of Christ."

"A grand thought," said Col. Brown. "But what about trusts? I suppose that the principle that we applied to natural monopolies can be applied also to the artificial monopolies or trusts."

"We will be compelled to modify it," Mr. Jones replied, "as follows:

"*Principle 27.—Trusts are a violation of the command, 'Thou shalt not steal.'*"

"Why do you modify it?" Mrs. Smith asked.

"Because the existence of natural monopolies is beneficial, is necessary," was the answer. "Without them we would live a savage and precarious life. Public roads are the beginning of civilization. Every advance in civilization, every invention, every discovery, adds to the

number of natural monopolies; and every natural monopoly adds to our wealth and culture. But the trusts are different. They are artificial, not natural; the result, not of invention or discovery, but of wicked laws; a sign, not of progress, but of decay. They add nothing to the general wealth or intelligence. As their existence, like the private ownership of natural monopolies, is a violation of the eighth commandment, it should be terminated."

"I think I perceive one difference between trusts and natural monopolies," Mr. Smith remarked. "The cost of the services rendered by the trusts can usually be estimated, while the cost of the services rendered by the natural monopolies cannot be discovered. Thus the sugar trust knows within a fraction of a mill how much each pound of sugar costs it, but the railroad company cannot learn what it costs to haul a ton of freight, or the water company what it costs to deliver a thousand gallons of water."

"The difference is not universal," Jack Robinson said. "Gas companies know accurately how much it costs to make gas; and they are natural monopolies."

"But their work is not done till the gas is delivered," replied Mr. Smith. "Can they discover what it costs them to deliver any thousand feet of gas?"

"The difference, whether it is general or partial, is immaterial to the question we are discussing," Col. Brown said. "The prices charged by trusts are not fixed by the cost of production. They are arbitrary. If we accept the interpretation of the eighth commandment which Brother Jones read us from the Shorter Catechism, they break the commandment."

"The trusts do some good. I remember when oil was

fifty cents a gallon. Now," said Mrs. Smith, "it is only fifteen cents a gallon."

"Do you think the Standard Oil Company reduced the price?" inquired her husband.

"No, I suppose not," was her halting reply.

"The reduction was due to the discovery of fresh oil fields and to improvements in transportation—pipe lines which are natural monopolies. If they were owned by the public the reduction would be greater, I fancy." This was the Colonel's explanation.

Returning to her defense of trusts, Mrs. Smith said: "The great department stores are trusts, I suppose. It is certainly a convenience to buy everything you want under one roof, and the prices are lower, too."

"Good or bad," Col. Brown responded, "they are hardly trusts; for trusts are artificial monopolies. They do not monopolize the selling of goods or try to do it. Like large factories, it must require great business skill to make them successful. For this reason I doubt whether they will be permanent."

"Some say that trusts are a necessary result of our progress—of invention," remarked Mr. Smith.

"It would be hard to maintain that position," replied Mr. Robinson. "The railroad, if fairly managed, places the factory a hundred miles away from the city on an equality with that within a mile of its center. Electric power can be transmitted instantly to a factory in the heart of the mountains. The natural tendency of all the inventions—of telegraphs, telephones, railroads, electric railways, electric power, rapid mails, typewriters, business methods—is to promote the establishment of small factories."

"Why, then, is production concentrating?" Miss Jenny asked.

"It is due to our wicked laws," Mr. Jones responded, "to railroad discrimination, to dishonest currency, to unjust taxation, to protective tariffs—in a word, to national wickedness, in which we are all partners."

"To come back to our point," said Col. Brown, "we are agreed that trusts are dishonest. What shall we do about it?"

"What does the government now do to stop stealing?" Mr. Jones asked.

"It uses all its powers," Mr. Robinson answered, "the constable, the sheriff, the posse comitatus, the militia, the national troops. If necessary, to suppress banditti, more regiments would be raised."

"Would it be necessary to use such measures against the trusts?" Col. Brown asked.

"It would not," was Mr. Jones' reply. "Remove the causes, and the trusts will soon die. Take off the protective tariff from refined sugars, and the sugar trust will die. The government ownership and a righteous management of the railroads would kill the cattle trust and a great many others. The public ownership of the pipe lines, which can not be honestly owned by any private company, would kill the Standard Oil Company. The sugar refineries, the Chicago and Kansas City slaughter-houses, the oil refineries and the other factories now run by trusts would continue business, but they would do it in an honest manner, without any advantage over others, except what their skill and capital gave them.

"Honest money," continued Mr. Jones, "would be a still worse blow at the trust, in three ways. The rising

value of money and the falling prices of everything else help the formation of trusts very greatly. They discourage the establishment of new factories. Prudent men will hesitate before exchanging the money which is rising in value for machinery which is falling in price. If a combination, therefore, can secure the control of the factories which are already established, it is reasonably sure of a monopoly.

"Panics also greatly assist the formation of trusts. In a panic those having the cash can frequently buy up the stock or plant of their rivals in business at low or nominal figures. With honest money there would be no panics, or at least they would be confined to narrow limits. As soon as general prices began to fall more money would be issued, and enough would be put into circulation to stop the decline in general prices; that is, to stop the panic.

"In a third way honest money would damage the trusts. To keep general prices stable more money must be put into circulation when they are falling. The best way to do this would be to loan it directly to the people on good security. Prudence would dictate that those asking the smallest loans should have the preference. Thus honest money would encourage the starting of smaller industries.

"The question," Mr. Jones said in conclusion, "is simply this: Are we with Christ or against him? There are no neutrals. We must be on one side or the other. He said that he came to fulfill the law, that is, the eighth commandment. The existence of trusts is a violation of that commandment. If we are not doing all we can, by word, by act and by our money, to destroy the trusts, we are not with Christ. If we claim to belong to

Christ and do nothing, we are hypocrites—conscious hypocrites, if we know the truth. We can not shelter ourselves from the wrath of God against hypocrisy behind the ministers and the church. By the diseases of our civilization, which have come to a head, God is calling upon us to repent."

The company broke up quietly.

Mr. Robinson saw Miss Smith home. He was a frequent visitor at the Smith residence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

ONE result of the conferences between John Robinson, Esq., and Miss Jenny Smith was the publication of the following notice in the *Christian Observer* of June 29, 1898:

ROBINSON-SMITH. — At the residence of Mr. John Smith, in Browntown, Tenn., on June 23, by the Rev. Jacob Jones, assisted by the Rev. Luther Calvin Wesley, D.D., John Robinson, Esq., and Miss Jane Smith.

Everything added to the pleasure of the wedding. The night was lovely. The ceremony was brief, impressive and scriptural, Mr. Jones requiring the bride to promise subjection to her husband. The bride looked sweet, and the groom affable. The supper was delicious.

While waiting for their wives Gen. Sylvester, Col. Brown and Mr. Jones took chairs under the trees in the yard, and the General remarked: "Prohibition will have another voter and worker."

"He will be a good one, too," said Col. Brown.

"I can not help wondering why the Prohibitionists insist on dragging a moral question into politics," was the General's next remark.

"Brother Jones," replied Col. Brown, "can enlighten you."

Thus appealed to, Mr. Jones said: "Last fall I held

twelve conversations with various persons concerning the true science of government. In these conversations twenty-seven principles were asserted and defended. I will add one more to the number:

"*Principle 28.—The licensing of the liquor traffic by the government is forbidden by every sound principle of sociology.*"

"If you can show that, Gen. Sylvester will no longer wonder that prohibition is in politics," said Col. Brown.

"The first principle," Mr. Jones began, "is that 'there is a higher law to which all human laws should conform.' "

"That will apply," Gen. Sylvester objected, "only if drinking is *per se* sinful."

"We are talking about the liquor traffic as it exists," replied the minister. "As the church dedicates buildings for religion, so the state sets apart buildings by its license laws for the sale of liquor. As the church licenses men to preach, so the state licenses men to sell liquor. As the ministers are expected to give themselves wholly to the ministry, so the license laws frequently forbid the liquor-sellers to carry on any other business in their saloons. As ministers live by the Gospel, so liquor-sellers live by their trade. Their wealth, the comforts of their family depend upon their success in persuading men to buy intoxicants."

"Such temples of drunkenness, and of all the vices that flow from it, are forbidden by the higher law," Col. Brown remarked.

"Proceed," said Gen. Sylvester.

"The second principle is: 'The Bible is the surest and plainest means of learning the higher law of

nations.' In the opinion of the church, the most diligent student of the Bible, it forbids the liquor traffic.

"The third principle is: 'One part of the mission of Christ is to propagate throughout the world the political principles of the Old Testament.' No one can be enrolled among the disciples of Christ who is engaged in the liquor traffic.

"If the fourth principle: 'Righteousness, conformity to the higher law, exalteth a nation,' is true, this iniquity, the legalizing of temples to drinking and vice, must degrade a nation.

"Skipping the fifth principle, which asserts that 'the first duty of all Christians is to study the Bible politically,' the sixth of the principles discussed last fall affirms: 'Whoever consciously and intentionally rejects or neglects the political teachings of the Bible is guilty of a great sin, of which he should at once repent.' "

"I have you there, Parson," exclaimed Gen. Sylvester. "The vast majority of Christians vote with parties that favor the license of the liquor traffic. In other words, they vote for license. Actions speak louder than words. It is evident that they do not agree with your interpretation of the 'higher law of nations' and of the Bible. We know from their ballots that they approve of license laws."

"I do not defend them," was the reply. "I pray daily that God may enlighten and convert them. And yet several things must be remembered. No one can vote against the licensing of the liquor traffic without also voting for woman suffrage and the pension frauds and robbery. In fact our voting means very little now. Probably a large majority of those who voted for McKinley in 1896 were opposed either to the McKinley

tariff or to the single gold standard or to the McKinley Cuban policy or to the pension steals. You would not say that all the Republicans and Democrats favor the pension robberies which both parties permit and encourage; for it would not be true. At present we can not learn a man's opinion from his ballot. Voting means as little as it accomplishes. We have not now a republican form of government."

"Our political methods need to be reformed," Gen. Sylvester admitted.

"The seventh principle is: 'The sole and only duty and end of civil government is to do justice,' " resumed Mr. Jones. "If the powers of government are limited to doing justice, plainly it has no right to grant to some the exclusive privilege of selling liquor."

"The conclusion follows from the premise," said Col. Brown.

"The eighth principle," Mr. Jones continued, "affirms that 'governments derive their authority from God.' It is absurd, profane, to imagine that God gives them any authority to establish temples of vice, for such our modern saloons are."

"The point is well taken," said Gen. Sylvester.

"The ninth principle is: 'The people are the judges appointed by God to determine what is right and what is wrong in political affairs.' Our people have judged the saloon and have decided that it is wrong. The preponderance of sentiment against it is very great. It has no defenders. There is practically no difference of opinion about its evils."

"You think that the ballots of the people show their sentiments?" Col. Brown asked.

"If I did I should think ours a nation of pickpockets

and bribers; for no party has taken a bold stand against the pension robberies, and most of them practice corruption. I judge from other things, from sermons, from church resolutions, from church discipline, from the papers, from the practice of railroads and other large employers, from prohibitory laws in states, counties and townships, that three-fourths of our people are opposed to saloons. When the people rule the saloon will go."

"The saloons corrupt our politics more than——" Gen. Sylvester began.

"It is not accidental," Col. Brown interrupted. "Their very existence depends upon the corruption of our politics. If the people ruled the saloons would die."

"The licensing of saloons is inconsistent with a righteous system of taxation," resumed Mr. Jones. It violates the principle that 'the Bible commands all to pay taxes.' It collects the revenue from the drinker's wife and children, for they are the ones who really pay the license fees, and they are least able to bear an extra burden. 'Government should collect no more taxes from the people than are needed for its modest support.' The amount of the revenue from liquor taxes is not fixed by the needs of government, but by the consumption of liquor and the number of licenses taken out. 'Unjust taxes are an abomination to the Lord,' and liquor taxes are unjust. They are taxes on poverty, on rags, on lack of bread, and not on abundance. If civil magistrates are God's ministers, their treasury is the Lord's; and it is a shame to put into it the money which is extorted from the families of drunkards."

"Surely you would not have liquor untaxed?" asked Gen. Sylvester.

"Why not?" was the Yankee reply.

"I don't know," said Gen. Sylvester.

"Taking all taxes from the manufacture and sale of liquor would have two good effects," Mr. Jones said. "It would no longer be an article of luxury. Whisky could be sold at twenty-five cents a gallon. Treating would cease. No one would invite another to take a drink worth less than a cent any more than he would 'treat' a friend to a piece of corn-bread or a cup of water. And this habit of treating, of social drinking, is the worst foe to temperance.

"The repeal of liquor taxes would close all the saloons. There would no longer be larger profits in selling beer than corn-meal, or whisky than molasses. Free competition would starve the saloon out of the business. But general merchants would not keep bar-rooms, for it would drive away other custom. They would make no more effort to sell liquor than molasses when the profits on both were equal."

"The change might not work that way," said Col. Brown.

"Right is right," replied Mr. Jones. "It is always safe to do right. If the liquor taxes are unjust they should be repealed even though the heavens fall."

"The people would not approve of free liquor," Gen. Sylvester objected.

"Another argument for the total prohibition of the traffic," returned Mr. Jones. "In regard to our other problems, free trade, currency, the demonetization of silver, usury, the private ownership of natural monopolies, the traffic exerts an evil influence in two ways. The use of liquor dulls the conscience of a great number of voters so that they can not see what justice, righteous-

ness, God's law, requires in these matters. It also introduces a disturbing influence into every political campaign, so that it is harder to obtain an expression of the real sentiments of the people about them."

"Very true," murmured the ex-Congressman.

" 'Civil government, as the agent of the Supreme Landlord, must make such laws as will promote the right use of land.' This principle condemns the use of land as sites for saloons. Prohibition will help to settle the land question.

"It will also aid in settling the labor question. 'The labor question is a religious one,' because laborers are God's children. It is surely wrong for government to encourage, by peculiar privileges, by creating artificial monopolies, the use of that which destroys the ability to work. The traffic decreases the demand for work. A dollar spent in a saloon does not employ as much labor as if spent in any other store. 'None should live without work.' The license of the traffic enables thousands to live on the vices of their fellow-citizens. 'Government should not diminish the wages of labor.' One thirsting for a dram will work at any price to obtain it; and thus the thirst, created by the fostering care of the law, reduces the price of the coarser kinds of work. 'Women should follow womanly callings.' Drinking leads to prostitution. Aside from this, the robbery of the wives of drunkards by government through liquor taxes forces many of them to work away from their homes, where the children especially and peculiarly need their care. 'The fourth commandment is chiefly an industrial or labor law.' It aims first at stopping all worldly work on the Sabbath so that all may rest. The saloon is the Sabbath's foe. It is not accidentally so,

but necessarily so. Its customers who go into it three times every day for a glass of beer will almost force their way into it on Sunday. Other merchants can sell as much in six days as in seven; the saloon-keeper can sell more in seven; and the leisure day is his best day for trade Thus the saloons must always tend to encourage the crime of Sabbath-breaking and to deprive the laborers of rest.

"Another principle reads: 'The existence of trusts is a violation of the eighth commandment.' The license laws create an artificial monopoly and are therefore forbidden by the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal.' Thus seven men in Browntown have the exclusive legal privilege of selling liquor in this county. They would much rather have the exclusive right to sell groceries or dry goods, for they could make more money out of it. It is no more honest to give them one than the other."

"I understand the position of the Prohibitionists better than I did," said Gen. Sylvester.

"But I have not spoken of the usual arguments against the saloons—the increase of crime, of poverty and of insanity, and the destruction of manhood, and the great waste of the traffic—twelve hundred millions of dollars every year."

Mrs. Sylvester and Mrs. Jones, who had been chatting, now claimed their husbands, and they took their departure after again wishing Mr. and Mrs. Robinson all happiness.

THE END.

INDEXES.

I.—A LIST OF THE PRINCIPLES AFFIRMED IN THIS VOLUME.

CHAPTER

1.—There is a higher law to which all human laws should conform. It is the law of God. II

2.—The Bible is the surest and plainest means of learning the higher law of nations III

3.—One part of the mission of Christ is to propagate throughout the world the political principles of the Old Testament IV

4.—Righteousness, conformity to the higher law, exalteth a nation V

5.—The first duty of all Christians is to study the Bible politically, in a reverent spirit, and in a thorough manner VI

6.—Whoever consciously and intentionally rejects or neglects the political teachings of the Bible is guilty of a great sin, of which he should at once repent . . VII

7.—The sole and only duty and end of civil government is to do justice, to secure to each and all the rights given to them by God . . . . . VIII, IX, X

8.—Governments derive their authority, and voters and officers their right to influence and control political action, from God XI

9.—The people are the judges appointed by God to decide what is right and what is wrong in political affairs . . . . . XII, XIII

10.—The Bible commands all to pay taxes, to assist in defraying the necessary expenses of civil government XIV

11.—National debts are forbidden by God XIV

CHAPTER.
12.—Government should collect no more taxes from the people than are needed for its modest support . . . XV
13.—Unjust taxes are an abomination to the Lord . . XV
14.—Import duties are forbidden, and free trade between nations is commanded by God XVI
15.—Every government should provide honest money for its own people XVII
16.—The demonetization of silver was a great sin against God XVIII
17.—Interest, or usury, is stealing. The government should discourage it . . . . . XIX, XX
18.—Civil government, as the agent of the Supreme Landlord, must adopt such laws as will promote the division of land among those who will make the best use of it XXI
19.—The labor question is a religious one XXII
20.—Every man has a right to work XXII
21.—None should live without work XXII
22.—Government should not diminish the wages of labor XXII
23.—Men should follow manly, and women womanly callings XXII
24.—Manual labor is Christ-like XXII
25.—The fourth commandment is chiefly an industrial or labor law XXII
26.—The private ownership of natural monopolies is a violation of the command, "Thou shalt not steal." . . . . . XXIII, XXIV
27.—Trusts are a violation of the command, "Thou shalt not steal." XXV
28.—The licensing of the liquor traffic by the government is forbidden by every sound principle of sociology . XXV

II.—ANALYTICAL INDEX.

THEME.

CHAPTER.

"Righteousness Exalteth a Nation." Prov. 14: 34 I, XXVI

INTRODUCTORY.

The Need of Righteousness I

Righteousness is Conformity to God's Law II

The Bible is the Best Means of Learning God's Law . III

Christ is the Teacher of God's Law IV

Expediency Cannot Teach God's Law V

It is our Duty to Study God's Law VI

Willful Neglect of this Duty is Sinful VII

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

The Sole Duty of Civil Government is to do Justice to All . . . . . VIII, IX, X

The Powers of Civil Government are from God . . . XI

The People are the God-appointed Judges to Decide what is Righteous XII

Women, as a Part of the People, Have a Share in Judging XIII

The Labor Question is Religious XXII

All Have a Right to Work XXI

None Should Live without Work XXII

Men Should Follow Manly, and Women Womanly Callings XXII

Manual Labor is Christ-like XXII

REFORMS REQUIRED BY RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Equal Taxation to Pay All the Expenses of Civil Government XIV

The Repeal of Unnecessary Taxes XV

The Repeal of Indirect Taxes XV

Free Trade XVI

CHAPTER.
Honest Money XVII
Remonetization of Silver XVIII
The Abolition of Interest . . . . . XIX, XX
The Single Tax XXI
The Enforcement of Sunday Laws XXII
The Public Ownership of Natural Monopolies XXIII, XXIV
The Destruction of Trusts XXV
The Abolition of the Liquor Traffic XXVI

III. TOPICAL INDEX.

Abolitionism, 22.
Anarchy, 71.
Assessing taxes, 108 et seq.
Australian ballot, 98.
Bellamy, Edward, quoted, 63, 65, 67, 68.
Bible analyzed, 29.
  and higher law, 28.
  in common schools, 53.
  political study of, 47 et seq., 53 et seq.
  proof of inspiration of, 47.
Billingsgate, political, 46.
Bimetallism, 145.
Blackstone's Commentaries, quoted, 24, 28.
Blood revenge, 164.
Christ and reform, 19, 40.
  hates heavy taxes, 117.
  hates unjust taxes, 119.
Christ's example, 187.
  mission, 35.
  reign on earth, 79.
Christian Endeavor, 45.
Church, its duty to the poor, 66.
  heartless, 163, 186-7.
  judgment of, 53 et seq.
  members in politics, 45, 131, 132.
  property should be taxed, 112.
Church, unity of, 49.
Cities, growth of, 202.
Civilization destroyed, 154.
Competition and socialism, 73.
Competition, railroad, 202.
Communism, 71, 184.
Confederate money, 140-1, 166-7.
Consistency, Christian, power of, 169, 181.
Constitution, U. S., quoted, 65.
  misuse of, 96.
Contested elections, 99.
Continental currency, 140-1, 166, 181.
Co-operation and socialism, 74.
Corrupt practices act, 99.
Corruption, remedy for, 88, 112-3.
Currency, 132 et seq., 151.
Dabney, Rev. Dr. R. L., quoted, 190.
Debts cannot be paid, 155.
Decalogue, analyzed, 190-1.
Demonetization of silver, 144 et seq.
Department stores, 208.
Discipleship, test of, 53, 131-2, 179, 210.

Discrimination, railroad, 200, 201.
Divorce, 164.
Eighth Commandment, 153 et seq., 195 et seq., 199 et seq., 206 et seq.
Ethics, data of, 46.
Expediency and righteousness, 42 et seq.
Faith, doctrine of, 57.
"Fiat" money, 136.
Foreign missions vs. protection, 127.
Fourth Commandment, 188.
Free coinage, 142 et seq.
Free trade, 125 et seq.
Golden rule, 205.
Government and God, 84 et seq.
Government, its only duty, 26, 63 et seq., 77 et seq.
Grants of land, 172.
Heaven, 62, 71.
Higher law, the, 22 et seq., 28 et seq.
Holy Spirit's power, 144.
Honor. See National Honor.
Hypocrisy, 157, 181, 210-1.
Imperative mandate, 99.
Import duties, 125 et seq.
Independence, Declaration of, quoted, 65-6, 90.
Indianapolis street cars, 196.
Indirect taxes, 118 et seq., 129, 178.
Initiative, 99.
Interest, 151 et seq., 159 et seq., 183.
Justice, only duty of government, 26, 63 et seq., 77 et seq.
Justice, the sole solution of, political problems, 71, 205-6.
Just taxes, 122-3, 183.
Labor question, 182 et seq.
Larrabee, Hon. Wm., 202.
Land, 123, 170 et seq., 182-3.
Legal tender, 139.
Liberty, defined, 67, 173.
Limitation of land-owning, 176.
Liquor traffic, 212 et seq.
Living without work, 183-4.
Loans, government, 165.
Lynch law, 98.
Manual labor, 187.
Millennium, 71.
Ministers destroying the Sabbath, 189-190.
trifling with Scripture, 187.
vices of, see Wesley, Rev. Dr.
virtues of, 86, 88.
Money, 132, etc.
and trusts, 209-10.
defined, 133, 151.
Monogamy, 98, 146.
Monopolies. See Natural Monopolies and Trusts.
Moses, 93.
Municipal corruption, 194.
Nationalism, Bellamy's, 69.
National debts, 113 et seq., 165.
honor, 44, 143.
sins, 148.
Natural monopolies, 183-4,

192 et seq., 199 et seq.
beneficial, 206.
and socialism, 72.
monopolies and trusts, 209.
Panics, 210.
Personal taxes, 108 et seq., 122, 178.
Pharisees, separatists, 39.
Political parties, expenses of, 112.
Politicians, why corrupt, 86, 88, 113.
Polygamy, 162.
Postal savings banks, 167.
Preaching politics, 59, 205.
Precepts, moral and positive, 26.
Prices, general and special, 134 et seq., 140.
Principles. See Index I.
Principles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, applied to the liquor traffic, 212 et seq.
Prohibition, 212 et seq.
party, 43.
Protection, 125 et seq.
and foreign missions, 127.
and trusts, 209.
Proportional representation, 99.
Railroads, 199 et seq.
Referendum, 99.
Religion and reform, 20.
Rent, 183.
Repudiation, 114, 204.
Sabbath, 188 et seq., 200, 218-9.
Saloons, liquor, 213, 217, 219.
Saturday half holiday, 190.
Shifting taxes, 119.
Shorter Catechism, quoted, 195-6, 201, 207.
Silver question, 142 et seq.
Single Tax, the, 124, 176 et seq.
Social contract theory, 85.
Socialism, 69 et seq., 195.
Spirituality of the church, 187.
of the Gospel, 37-8.
Standard Oil Company, 208.
Stickney, A. B., on the railroad question, 201-2.
Sunday laws, 189-190.
Tariff and righteousness, 42.
and railroad rates, 201.
Taxes, 108 et seq., 116 et seq., 125 et seq.
and money, 132 et seq.
Temperance sentiment, 215.
Tenement houses, 202.
Theft, Christ's punishment for, 57.
Treating, 217.
Trusts, 184, 192, 206, etc.
and socialism, 72.
"Use and occupancy," 176-7.
Usury, 151 et seq., 159 et seq., 183.
Utility and value, 133.
Value defined, 133.
Voting, 92 et seq., 101 et seq., 214-6.
W. C. T. U., 45.
Wages, 184-5.
War discouraged, 114, 128.

Wesley, Rev. Dr. Luther Calvin; a common type of the successful minister. Is a hypocrite, 53 et seq., 157, 181. His hypocrisy defended, 149, 160, 169. Tells fibs, 61. Threatens heresy trial, 59. Out of pulpit, 83.
"Wild cat" bank notes, 166.
Woman suffrage, 99, 101, etc.
Work, right to, 182.

IV. TEXTUAL INDEX.

A LIST OF TEXTS QUOTED, REFERRED TO OR ILLUSTRATED.

Genesis, 171.

Exodus, Ch. 2:14, 93; 3:10, 91; 3:16, 93; 4:29, 93; 20:8-11, 188 et seq.; 20:15, 153 et seq., 195 et seq., 199 et seq., 206 et seq.; 21:13, 164; 22:1-4, 57; 22:25, 159.

Leviticus, Ch. 19:15, 77; 19:34, 205; 19:35-37, 139; 22:8, 161; 25:35-38, 160.

Numbers, Ch. 15:32-36, 188; 35:9-29, 164.

Deuteronomy, Ch. 1:13, 97; 4:41-43, 164; 5:12-15, 188 et seq.; 5:19, 152 et seq., 195 et seq., 199 et seq., 206 et seq.; 14:21, 161; 16:18-20, 78; 19:1-3, 164; 22:5, 185; 23:19-20, 160; 24:1-4, 164.

Joshua, 171. Ch. 9:3-27, 115; 20:1-9, 164.

Judges, 26, 171. Ch. 11:4-11, 94, 97.

I. Samuel, Ch. 3:19-20, 91; 8:7, 89; 8:22, 94 et seq., 101 et seq., 145; 10:1, 91; 10:17-24, 91; 10:26, 97.

II. Samuel, Ch. 2:4, 97; 5:3, 97; 21:1-9, 115; 23:3, 78.

I. Kings, 171. Ch. 11:31, 91; 12:20, 97.

Nehemiah, Ch. 5:1-13, 163.

Psalms, Psm. 15:5, 162; 41:1, 107; 72:2, 80; 82:3, 78.

Proverbs, Ch. 11:1, 139; 16:11-12, 139.

Isaiah, Ch. 1:16-17, 78; 3:14-15, 116; 5:1-7, 58; 11:2, 80.

Jeremiah, Ch. 22:3-4, 79; 23:5, 80.

Ezekiel, Ch. 18:8, 18:13, 18:17, 163; 22:12, 163.

Amos, Ch. 8:4-8, 138.

Malachi, Ch. 4:2, 206.

Matthew, Ch. 4:17, 38; 4:23, 38; 5:17-20, 39; 5:31-2, 164; 7:12, 205; 10:37, 131; 17:24-27, 112; 19:3-9, 164; 19:16, 36; 21:33-41, 58; 22:21, 41, 97, 112; 22:39, 205; 23:23, 36; 25:27, 161.

Mark, Ch. 1:14, 38; 10:2-12, 164; 10:17, 36; 12:1-9, 58; 12:17, 41, 97, 112; 12:31, 205.
Luke, Ch. 2:14, 114, 128; 2:51, 187; 3:9, 203; 4:16-21, 38; 12:14, 41, 97; 18:18, 36; 19:23, 161; 20:9-16, 58; 20:25, 41, 97, 112.
John, Ch. 3:2, 36; 13:3-17, 187; 18:36, 41; 19:11, 91.
Acts, Ch. 17:26, 126.
Romans, Ch. 1:17, 36; 3:4, 131; 13:1-7, 91; 13:6-7, 112.
I. Corinthians, Ch. 9:1-12, 112.
II. Thessalonians, Ch. 3:10, 183.
I. Timothy, Chapters 1:19—2:4, 51; 2:12, 103.
Hebrews, Ch. 6:16, 109.
Revelation, Ch. 22:18-19, 57.

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